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ABRIDGED
HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY.
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ABRIDGED
HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY,
CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL;
FROM THE
EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.

COMPILED BY
J. S. C. de RADIUS,
A NATIVE OF VOLHYNIA IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

Third Edition.—Revised.

LONDON:
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TO THE READER.

THE design of this publication is not so much to fix the attention, of those whose minds are already enriched with the treasures of sacred literature, as to exhibit, if not in the most lucid, yet in a concise form, the various stages and aspects of the Christian religion, in each epoch of its history.

Brevity then being the principal aim, it has been found necessary to hurry over many occurrences, and to narrate short and simple

PREFACE.

facts and events, which, if detailed, would of themselves occupy a space, far exceeding the whole of this volume. For this reason, also, the various controversies which agitated the Christian era at different periods, are not mentioned; and, moreover, an account of certain branches of the Reformed Church, of the Church of England, and of the different Dissenting bodies is omitted.

Should the Reader bestow the slightest approbation on the contents of this book, it must be reflected back on the originals from which it is compiled. At least one advantage, it is presumed, may be derived from its perusal, namely, the conviction that an intimate and extensive acquaintance with Church history will necessarily promote "the approximation of different religious views."

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ABRIDGED HISTORY

OR

CHRISTIANITY.



FIRST CENTURY.

At the time of Christ's appearance on earth, the religion and arms of the Romans were spread throughout the world. With the view of not only confirming their authority, but also of abolishing the inhuman rites practised by the barbarous nations whom they had subjugated, the victorious Romans introduced everywhere their own system of religion. Nevertheless, from the extent of the Roman Empire, then under Augustus Cæsar, from its form

of government, and from its great intercourse with other nations, civilization and literature succeeded to barbarism and ignorance, by which the reception and progress of the gospel were considerably facilitated. All the then existing nations, except the Jews, were devoted to Polytheism; departed heroes were generally idolized. The sacrifices offered to these deities, were according to their respective nature and offices; most nations offering animals, and many, human beings. Besides this public worship of the gods, the Greeks and eastern nations celebrated secret rites, called mysteries. No notions of future retribution were entertained.

It is obvious that this theology had no tendency to promote real virtue, and the consequence was a general corruption of manners, leading to the impunity


of the worst of crimes, as fully testified by Juvenal and Persius among the Latins, and Lucian among the Greeks.

The Jews, at this period under Herod the Great, were nearly in the same state of subjection as other nations. Their religion had lost much of its primitive purity, as well as the form of external worship, though less so than other parts. They considered religion as consisting solely in the mosaic rites and in certain external acts of duty towards the Gentiles; all other nations they regarded as excluded from heaven; and believed in invisible powers, magic, &c., which they had partly brought from the Babylonian captivity, and partly from their neighbours, the Syrians, the Egyptians, and Arabians. Their learned doctors, even, who boasted of a knowledge of the law and theology, were at variance

in their views, and divided into a number of sects. Yet, whatever errors the Jews had imported from their neighbours, they still adhered strictly to the laws of Moses; hence Synagogues were erected throughout Judea.

The Samaritans, who had their temple of worship on mount Gerizim, although corrupted by the idolatrous customs of the Pagan nations, alone appear to have had more just ideas of the offices and nature of the Messiah. Can we then wonder, since the teachers and leading men at the period of Christ's birth were thus sunk in superstition and ignorance, that the nations themselves were so in a still greater degree? All looked for a deliverer, but not for such a one as was promised; they expected a warlike prince, not a meek and spiritual Saviour.

From this brief account of the ignorant and miserable state of the world at this epoch, it is evident that mankind required some Divine Instructor to convey to the mind true and sure principles of religion, and to recall them to the paths of virtue. No human power being capable of dispelling the clouds which obscured the earth, the Son of God, the foretold Messiah, was sent forth to fulfil his celestial mission. He was born at Bethlehem of Judea, in the year of Rome 748; and though we have an account of his birth, lineage, family, and parents, yet little is said of his infancy. We know that soon after his birth his parents fled into Egypt, to avoid the inhuman edict of Herod, and at twelve years of age we find him disputing in the temple. We hear nothing of him till he was thirty. At this time



he commenced his ministry, having sent John to prepare the way before him by preaching repentance and baptism. Christ persevered in his ministry for three years, elected twelve apostles, and appointed seventy disciples. His own efforts were entirely confined to the Jews, nor did he at first permit his disciples to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. His fame, however, soon spread among other nations, and his success in the conversion of the Jews became very great, but as his doctrine was in opposition to the errors of the time, he was, at last, by the treachery of the apostate Judas, accused before the High Priest and Sanhedrim of treason against Cæsar, and finally put to death. On the third day he rose again, and for forty days after he conversed with his disciples, instructing them

more fully on many points; at this period, also, he commissioned them to preach the gospel to all nations. After the ascension of Christ, according to his promise, the Holy Ghost was effused upon the apostles, thereby filling them with all knowledge.

They commenced to preach the Gospel to the Jews and Samaritans, and after some years of great success, they began their labours amongst the Gentiles, having previously elected Matthias in the place of the traitor Judas. We find also the accomplished and courageous Saul added to their number, who, from first persecuting the Christians, became one of their most zealous supporters.

The first Christian church was founded at Jerusalem, and served as a model for every other erected during the first century. It was governed by the

apostles themselves; separate assemblies were also held, where, assisted by the apostles, they prayed, were instructed, and celebrated the Lord's Supper. From Jerusalem they proceeded to plant churches in various parts of the world, and wherever they went the purity of Christ's religion was greatly admired. The rapid progress of Christianity amongst the Gentiles must be attributed indeed to an omnipotent interference, especially if we contemplate the humble instruments which effected it.

The Emperor Nero was one of the greatest persecutors of the Christians, not only did he enact laws against them, but in the month of November, 64, having set fire to the city of Rome, for his own amusement, he laid the blame on the Christians, and put them to death in all

directions; some assert that St. Paul and St. Peter suffered then Martyrdom. The death of Nero in 68, suspended these calamities, which, however, were revived in 94, under Domitian, and other emperors.

The great end of Christ's mission being to establish an universal church, it became necessary to appoint first instructors to convert the Jews and Gentiles; and such were the apostles, the seventy disciples, with the evangelists. Neither Christ nor his apostles seem to have commanded anything regarding the external administration of the church, although we perceive a certain form already then established, which, obviously, greatly changed, has descended to the present time.

The apostles appointed deacons and elders in the church of Jerusalem, and

presbyters in every city; St. Paul named elders in all the churches founded by himself; and as Christianity spread, the apostles found it necessary to vest the supreme power in one person, who, from his superintending care, was called *Episcopas* or Bishop, invariably chosen out of the order of presbyters, and invested with the entire welfare of the church. The erection of new distant churches, rendering the direct inspection and personal care of one Bishop not only difficult, but impracticable, *chorepiscopi* or country bishops were appointed to each diocese, holding a rank between the bishop and presbyter.

The whole of the Christian religion may be comprehended in these two great principles,—Faith and Practice: the first is termed by the apostles,

mystery or the truth; the latter, godliness and piety. The rule and standard of both, are the books of the Old and New Testament, which the apostles and their disciples took every care to explain and to interpret, not so much by the subtleties of human wisdom, as by their own example and actions.

The rites and ceremonies of the primitive church are most remarkable for their simplicity. This, however, did not exclude certain external rites, of which Christ himself instituted two, to be continued for ever, namely: Baptism and the Holy Supper. Necessity also, no doubt, compelled the apostles to tolerate many other external rites; nevertheless, they were unanimous in setting apart for public worship the first day of the week, and in observing two anniversary festivals,—one in me-

mory of Christ's resurrection, the other of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them. The essential parts of divine worship of the first Christians, consisted in the public reading of portions or lessons from the Scriptures. After the lessons followed some brief exhortation, at the conclusion of which, all joined their bishop in prayer, and then certain hymns were sung by a few appointed for that purpose. Oblations of bread, wine, &c., followed their prayers; a certain portion was set apart for the Lord's Supper, and after consecration from the bishop, it was distributed by the deacons. The sacrament of Baptism was administered in this century at appointed places, and was performed by the bishop alone. In after times, this power was conferred on the presbyters and chorepiscopi.

SECOND CENTURY.

THE limits of the church were now considerably enlarged, owing to a course of favourable circumstances. The mildness, humanity, and virtues of the Roman Emperors were particularly advantageous to those Christians who lived under their sceptre, various remedies being applied to suppress the severe edicts issued against them in the previous century.

From Gaul Christianity penetrated into that part of Germany then subject to Rome, and thence is thought to have passed into Britain. Some German churches claim St. Peter as their founder, while the Britons, on the authority of Bede, believe that in this century their

king received from the Roman Pontiff Christian instructors. It is probable that Christianity reached Transalpine Gaul, now France, before the conclusion of the apostolic age; certain it is, however, that churches were established first at Lyons and Vienne.

The multiplied translations of the New Testament into the Italic, Syriac, Egyptian, and Æthiopic languages, as also the apologetic writings, of many distinguished men, may be named as having much contributed to the promulgation of the gospel. The Jews were again furnished with fresh calamities, first under Trajan and then under Adrian. Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, and thus for a considerable time the Jews had no power to exercise their malignity towards the Christians.

Although the Senate of Rome at the

beginning of this century had annulled the cruel edicts of Nero and Nerva, persecuting the Christians still prevailed, most odious calumnies being everywhere industriously circulated, and accusations of impiety and atheism established against them, so far that towards the end of this century, when Severus became Emperor, Asia, Egypt, and other provinces, were deluged with the blood of martyrs, as appears from the testimony of Tertullian.

From the prosperous and calamitous events of this period, the attention may be directed to the farther development of the form of church administration, its doctrines and rites, &c. One Inspector or Bishop presided over every Christian assembly, assisted by a council of presbyters of unlimited number; Deacons of various classes were subordinate to both.

About this period an association of all the Christian churches was formed, and assembled at stated times. These assemblies are known under the Greek appellation of Synods, the Latins called them Councils, and the laws enacted by them Canons. We find the authority of the bishops considerably increased at these councils; in the mean time the bounds of the church being enlarged, the creation of a new order of ecclesiastics took place. These were the Patriarchs, among whom arose a new dignity, investing the bishop of Rome with the title and power of Prince of the Patriarchs.

The Christian system had hitherto retained its original simplicity, admitting no other doctrine but the apostolic creed. This simplicity, however, was soon subverted, through an endeavour of

explaining obscure points in religion, and a tendency of expressing the plain precepts of Christ in the language of philosophers and rabbins. But notwithstanding this abuse, all parties united in zealous veneration of the Scriptures, as well as in their propagation.

Both Jews and Heathens, accustomed to pompous and magnificent ceremonies, and considering them essential to religion, held Christianity in the utmost contempt, for Christians had neither Temples, Altars, Victims, or Priests. In all probability, therefore, the rulers of the church adopted in this century many unnecessary rites and ceremonies, with the sole view of gaining proselytes and of refuting the calumnies of their enemies. The respect paid to the Greek and Roman mysteries was a further inducement to Christians to give their

religion a mystic air; as also the wish and even necessity of conforming in a certain degree to the prejudices of converted Jews and Gentiles, may account, why the custom, prevalent before Christ in all eastern nations of worshipping towards the east, was retained by Christians, and prevails among some to this day.

In the manner of observing the Pascal Day or anniversary of Christ's death, the Christians of Lesser Asia differed much from the rest. They all fasted during the great week, but the Asiatic Christians observed this fast on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, at the time of the Passover, and three days after celebrated the resurrection, while the Western Christians held their Pascal feast on the night preceding the anniversary of Christ's resurrection. It

is obvious that this practice led to great contentions. Towards the end of this century, therefore, Victor, Bishop of Rome, wrote an imperious letter to the Asiatic prelates, commanding them to celebrate the Easter festival as the Western Churches did, although to no effect, until the council of Nice made the Asiatic conform to the Western Church. The Sacrament of Baptism was celebrated publicly twice every year at the festivals of Easter and Pentecost, by the bishop. The persons baptised received the form of the cross, were anointed, and by prayers recommended to the favour of God, and then received milk and honey; the latter as a symbol of regeneration, borrowed and transformed from eastern Paganism.

THIRD CENTURY.

AT the the beginning of this century the Christian Church suffered various calamities throughout the Roman provinces, which were increased in 203, by a law from the Emperor Severus forbidding his subjects to change their religion for that of either Jew or Christian. But notwithstanding the dreadful persecutions, their rights and immunities were most admirably augmented. In the army and at court were many Christians, who even assembled together for public worship with the connivance of the Emperors and Magistrates.

From 211 to 249, none of the Roman Emperors molested the Christians, some of them even paid homage to Christ's

doctrines, and were consequently favourably disposed towards his disciples. The reign of Maximinian, however, must be excepted, for he caused the death of several bishops, and ordered the massacre of many other Christians. At this epoch the Goths received the gospel from some Asiatic missionaries, the Christian assemblies in Gaul were considerably enlarged, and under the Emperor Decius, churches were erected at Paris, Tours, Arles, and other places.

The German churches of Cologne, Treves, Metz, &c., were also founded, and it is believed that Christianity for the first time was introduced into Scotland.

In 249 Decius Trajanus mounted the throne; with him fresh persecutions arose, and continued till 254, when Valerian restored tranquillity to the

Christian Church, which was enjoyed during five years, Macrianus, a bigot to Paganism, then gained so complete an ascendancy over Valerian, that he persuaded him to pass an edict forbidding Christian assemblies, and in the year following, another more severe was issued, in consequence of which Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, Sixtus, Bishop of Rome, and Laurentius, a Roman deacon, perished.


It may be well here to remark, that the Christians found other enemies in the platonic philosophers, who did them almost as much injury by calumny and declamation, as the Emperors by fire and sword.

As to the Jews, though their powers to injure the cause of Christ, were now much limited, they did not desist from evincing their enmity to it, whenever

and wherever they found an opportunity.

The form of ecclesiastical administration had by this time acquired some degree of stability. The priesthood consisted of three degrees or orders, that of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon; general councils were established, over which presided some bishop by appointment; and also the bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, had a kind of pre-eminence over the rest, which latter degenerated in an aspiration to greater power and authority, and was soon followed by a train of evils. The bishops began to assume a princely splendour, the presbyters gave themselves up to luxury, and the deacons to a corrupt ambition. From this epoch may be dated the origin of minor or lesser orders, which were added to those of bishop, presbyter, and deacon.


The chief doctrines of Christianity, hitherto explained in plain and simple language, began to be mixed with the abstract reasonings of philosophy, creating a new species of theology termed mystic; establishing that silence, tranquillity, repose, and solitude, alone were means by which men could kindle the divine nature diffused through all human souls, &c. This strange way of reasoning drove many fanatics into deserts and caves, where they macerated their bodies with hunger and thirst. Notwithstanding these delusions, great was the zeal in circulating and explaining the Scriptures. Rites and ceremonies were multiplied to a great extent, the celebration of the Lord's Supper also underwent some alteration; the prayers was lengthened, the pomp increased, and, according to Prudentius,




gold and silver vessels used for the first time. The Christians prayed at three stated times according to Jewish custom, and the sign of the cross was considered as a charm against the power of evil spirits.

FOURTH CENTURY.

CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS, one of the four Emperors who simultaneously governed the Roman Empire at the beginning of the fourth century, having abandoned the absurdities of Polytheism, treated the Christians with so much kindness that the pagan priests taking serious alarm, after several unsuccessful attempts, ultimately inclined Diocletian, in 303, to issue an order for destroying



all the Christian churches, burning their books, and abolishing their privileges. Disturbances in Armenia and Syria, with other events, were industriously made use of as accusations against the Christians, and produced a new edict, commanding all the bishops and ministers of the Church to be imprisoned, a third authorised the application of torments; and in 304, Diocletian issued a fourth edict, instructing the magistrates to force every Christian to make sacrifices to the gods. Thus till 311 the Christians suffered severely, but in return enjoyed from 313, greater favours and tranquillity than ever before, in consequence of Constantine the Great embracing Christianity. In 324, becoming sole governor of the Roman Empire, Constantine employed all his energies and power to establish the



worship of Christ, and to root out the superstition of Paganism, so that towards the end of this century the Gentile religions were irrecoverably on the decline.

The number of barbarous nations which received the Gospel of Christ sufficiently testifies the zeal and diligence of Constantine and his successors. It is probable that both the greater and lesser Armenia admitted the doctrines of Christ at their first promulgation, but the Armenian church had not been completely established before the present period.

About the middle of this century the gospel was preached in Æthiopia, in Iberia, now called Georgia, &c. In the European provinces the work of conversion went on but slowly, and the Christians who lived beyond the limits

of the Roman Empire had much to endure, especially in Persia, under Sapor II., who distinguished himself most inhumanly by three persecutions against the Christians in his dominions, the last of which raged from 330 to 370.

Constantine the Great made no material change in the administration of the Church, except in assuming to himself the supreme authority, with the right of governing and modelling it according to his own pleasure. As usual, bishops were freely elected, and the lesser councils still formed by provincial bishops, where they deliberated on the interests of the whole Church. To these lesser councils were afterwards added oecumenical councils consisting of commissioners from every Christian Church, and the first of these universal councils was

established by the Emperor, and held at Nice in 325.

However beneficial these general councils might appear, they gave cause to agitation and dissensions, and gradually many changes took place in the rights and privileges of the ecclesiastical orders, so far that at the conclusion of this century there remained scarcely an indication of the primitive church administration. By transferring the seat of government to Byzantium, where he founded the city of Constantinople, Constantine raised up in the Bishop of this new metropolis a formidable rival to the Roman Pontiff. The Bishop of this See immediately assumed an equal degree of dignity with that of Rome, and a superiority over every other bishop. These pretensions being approved of by the Emperor, a Council,—

held at Constantinople in 381, by order of Theodosius the Great,—placed the bishop, contrary to the consent of the Roman Prelate, by the third canon of that Council, in the first rank after the Bishop of Rome, and consequently above those of Alexandria and Antioch. This sudden and unjust promotion excited the bitterest animosity between the Bishops of Alexandria, Rome, and Constantinople, which did not subside in after ages, and produced the entire separation of the Latin and Greek Churches. The fundamental doctrines of Christianity were hitherto pursued in their original purity in most churches, though very often explained with a certain degree of ignorance and obscurity; moreover, those principles of the Platonic philosophy, which before Constantine most of the Christian doc-

tors had adopted, were now confirmed. Hence arose that extravagant veneration for departed saints, those notions of a certain purifying fire, the celibacy of priests, the worship of relics, and many other absurdities. Various superstitions besides were gradually substituted in the place of true religion, such, for instance, as a ridiculous desire for imitating Pagan rites, and of blending them with the Christian worship. Hence frequent pilgrimages to Palestine and to the tombs of the martyrs; earth was brought from the Holy Land as an antidote to evil spirits; and, lastly, public processions, supplications, and lustrations were everywhere adopted.

Monastic orders were now for the first time instituted in Greece, Palestine, and Syria, and thence introduced

into Italy, Gaul, Britain, and other parts of Europe.

While the Roman Emperors were promoting Christianity, the Bishops, through a mistaken piety, overwhelmed the simplicity of the Gospel by numerous rites and ceremonies which they invented for its embellishment, so that in reality there now was but little difference between the Christian and Pagan worship. They had both a most pompous and magnificent ritual, gorgeous robes, mitres, tiaras, crosiers, images, &c. Magnificent churches were everywhere erected, and so adorned with pictures and images, that they rather resembled the Pagan temples.

These few facts sufficiently show how Christianity had degenerated, and what a sphere was opened to controversy, fanaticism, delusion, fraud, and imposition.

The Christian worship consisted of hymns, prayers, the reading of the Scriptures, a sermon, and concluded with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This order of worship was, however, not uniformly the same everywhere, and may account for the number of Liturgies of this time.

The sermons had lost much of their dignity, and modelled to the rules of human eloquence, were followed with clapping of hands and acclamations of applause.

The festivals celebrated in most Christian churches were five in number. In commemoration of the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and also of the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. The birth and baptism of Christ was celebrated in one festival by the Eastern Christians on the sixth of January, and

called the Epiphany; the Western Christians celebrated the birth of Christ on the twenty-fifth of December. Fasting was considered in this century as the most effectual method of pleasing God. Baptismal founts were now erected in the porch of each church, and baptism administered during the vigils of Easter and Whitsuntide with lighted tapers by the bishop and presbyters. In some places salt was used as a symbol of purity and wisdom, and a double unction everywhere adopted.

The Lord's Supper was celebrated two or three times a week, sometimes at the tomb of martyrs and at funerals, which custom was certainly the origin of masses. In many cases the bread and wine were exposed to view, and hence, not long after, the adoration of symbols was undoubtedly introduced.

FIFTH CENTURY.

IN order to understand ecclesiastical, an acquaintance with civil history is almost indispensable, moreover, as a retrospective view will show the influence of the latter on the Christian Church during the preceding centuries. It is necessary, therefore, to remind the reader, that at the opening of the fifth century, the Roman Empire was divided into two distinct sovereignties, the Eastern and Western. Arcadius, in the east, reigned at Constantinople; Honorius, in the West, at Ravenna. The latter prince, illustrious for his private virtues, neglected the interests of the state, and indifferently suffered the provinces of Italy, Rome even, to be invaded and plundered by the Goths. This fierce and barbarous people issuing out of

Germany overspread Italy, Gaul, and Spain, where they established new kingdoms. Their invasion was followed by still more formidable ones during the reign of the succeeding Emperors. Odoacer ultimately at the head of the Heruli, in 476, gave the mortal blow to the Western Empire. About sixteen years after this Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, attacked these barbarians at the request of Zeno, Emperor of the East, defeated Odoacer in several battles, and was rewarded with a kingdom in Italy, which lasted from 493 to 552.

Though these troubles were obviously detrimental to Christianity, yet the remains of idolatry were nearly extirpated by the zeal of the Christian Emperors of the East, amongst whom Theodosius the younger distinguished himself particularly. In the Western

Empire, the decay of idolatry was by no means so rapid, for we find that the feasts of Saturn and Pan, the combats of Gladiators, and other Pagan rites, were still celebrated, even by persons of the highest rank. Many idolatrous nations were, however, converted to the Christian faith. In the east the inhabitants of the Libanus and Antilibanus embraced it.

The gospel was promulgated among the German nations at different times, but it is not ascertained when and through whom the Vandals, Sueves, and Alans were converted. As to the Burgundians, who inhabited the banks of the Rhine, Socrates asserts that they adopted the gospel from an idea that Christ would protect them from the inroads of the Huns. In 496, Clovis, King of the Salii, having embraced

Christianity, four thousand of his subjects followed his example.

The Roman Pontiff sent Paladius to Ireland to propagate the gospel, but with little success. After his death Succathus, a Scotchman, by direction of the same pontiff, arrived in Ireland in 432, and assuming the name of Patrick, founded, in 472, the Archbishopric of Armagh. His great success was rewarded with the title of the apostle of the Irish, and as such his name is revered to the present day.

The chief sufferers from the mentioned invasion of the barbarians throughout the Western Empire were the Christians, not, indeed, owing to any opposed religious principle of the invaders, but to the instigation of the Pagans who yet remained in the empire, and who took an opportunity for renewing the

old charge against them, of being the cause of these tumults and calamities. In Gaul and the adjoining provinces the Goths and Vandals committed many barbarities towards the Christians.

The inhabitants of Britain, who had long since embraced Christianity, were much harassed by the Picts and Scots, so that in 449, their King, Voltigern, invited to his aid the Anglo-Saxons from Germany. These allies soon, however, became the oppressors of the Britons, and a sanguinary war was the consequence, which, having lasted one hundred and fifty years, terminated in the total defeat of the latter. During these unhappy events the British Church was nearly destroyed by the Anglo-Saxons, whose cruelties are almost without parallel in history.


The imprudent zeal of Abdas, Bishop

of Suza, brought calamities upon the Christians in Persia. Abdas being put to death in 414, the Christian churches were levelled to the ground.

The Pagans were not the only enemies against whom the Christians had to contend; the Jews, living in many parts of the east in opulence, oppressed them in various ways.

The external forms of ecclesiastical government were now continually changing. The promotion of the Bishops of Constantinople by the Council held there in the preceding century, as mentioned, had been productive of the greatest animosity between the different bishops of other sees. All spiritual care of the Church was at an end, and nothing else appears to have occupied the bishops of this period but schemes and plans for additional acquisition of

power. The result of these angry disputes and tendencies was the erection of five superior rulers of the Church, called Patriarchs. On them were conferred peculiar duties, rights, and privileges; they alone consecrated bishops, assembled councils of their own clergy, passed judgment in cases where bishops might be accused, and lastly, could appoint vicars or deputies for the purpose of preserving order in distant provinces; the decisions, however, were left to the arbitration of the Emperor. Without going into particulars it is evident that this new church jurisdiction could neither arrest the current of evil nor divert it; on the contrary, it materially contributed to its spread, and to the corruption resulting therefrom. As a proof it may be mentioned, that not only the bishops held courts with



imperial splendour, but even the presbyters considered themselves superior in rank to the Emperors. Nor can this corrupt state of the clergy be wondered at, when it is known that men of every description, without examination and without choice, were admitted into that body. The monastic orders from a complete solitude now gradually rose into great esteem and opulence, so that the great number of converts consecrated exceeds all belief.

Owing to the multiplicity of controversies, many points of religion were more fully explained and refined during this century than in any former; but, on the other hand, the doctors of the Christian faith no longer confining themselves to the simple explanations of primitive times, had recourse to unintelligible subtleties, ambiguous terms,



and obscure definitions. Thus religion became daily more clouded with superstition, and corrupted with the inventions of human folly. The happy souls of departed saints were now everywhere continually invoked, and images worshipped; great efficacy against the power of Satan was also attributed to the bones of martyrs and to the figure of the cross.*

No one appears to have attempted the formation of a complete system of theology during this century, nor were the doctrines of religion either understood or explained according to their original simplicity. A small body of reformers used all their efforts to check

* "There was no order of men held in higher veneration than the Stylites, fanatics who stood motionless upon the top of pillars for many years. Their absurd founder, Simeon, a Syrian shepherd, passed thirty-seven years of his life upon five pillars, from six to forty cubits high, in order to be as near heaven as possible."

the growing superstition, but the number and reputation of their antagonists rendered their labours abortive.

In consequence of the ignorance of the ministers of the Church, of the political troubles of the day, and also of the immorality prevalent among all classes of society, true and sincere piety was overwhelmed with an insupportable weight of ceremonies; the worship of God had degenerated into the pomp and splendour of a public spectacle. His name was everywhere invoked with turbulent acclamations, and the churches were adorned with costly images, particularly with the image of the Virgin Mary. Penitents were also allowed by an indulgence of Leo the Great, to confess their sins in private instead of, as before, in presence of the congregation. This innovation destroyed the

only remaining barrier to the progress of sin.

SIXTH CENTURY.

DIRECTING our attention to the sixth century we find that the patronage of the Grecian Emperors, combined with the zeal of the prelates of Constantinople, contributed greatly towards the conversion of many barbarous inhabitants near the Euxine Sea. In the Western parts, Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, was very successful in converting the idolatrous nations, particularly after Clovis had embraced Christianity.

In Britain, by the marriage of Bertha, Daughter of Cherebert, King of Paris, with Ethelbert, King of Kent, the latter became a convert to the Christian religion, induced partly by the persua-

sion of his queen, partly by the preaching of Augustine, who, at the head of forty Benedictine monks in 596, was sent into Britain by Gregory the Great. The Picts and Scots became Christians through the pious labours of Columban, an Irish monk. In Germany the Church was further strengthened by the accession of the Bohemians, Thuringians, and Boii; and in every part of the world considerable numbers of Jews renounced their idolatrous practices.

In defiance, however, of the edicts and laws of Emperors, many men of family and learning still remained attached to idolatry; so that notwithstanding the great progress of the Gospel the Christians, even in this century, experienced great barbarity in many places. In Britain the Anglo-Saxons most cruelly persecuted the

Christians; so did the Huns in Thrace, Greece, and other provinces, during the reign of Justinian. In 568 the Lombards issued forth from Pannonia, invading all Italy, and great were the calamities suffered by the Christians. Fortunately their third monarch, Autharis, embraced Christianity in 587. Nowhere, however, did Christianity suffer more than in Persia, under the Emperor Chosroes, one of the greatest enemies to Christ's doctrines.

During this century the administration of the Church retained its external form with scarcely an alteration, although the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople remained in perpetual hostility, in which Gregory the Great, in 588, showed himself the most conspicuous.

The power and credit of the monks now everywhere increased; in the East

their numbers were amazing, and in the Western provinces, the monastic life was held in great veneration. A certain Abbot Congell was very successful in filling the monasteries with devotees of both sexes in Britain. Religious worship having lost its ancient simplicity, more and more absurdities and superstitions were added; the controversial writers persisting in obscuring the pure and sublime truths of Christianity by their vain philosophy; the public teachers in the meantime expressing nothing on the minds but a strict compliance with ridiculous ceremonies and exact observances of doctrines concerning the worship of images and saints, the fire of purgatory, the power of relics and other strange anomalies. In proportion, therefore, as true piety vanished, superstitious rites and ceremonies increased; the

Western Churches especially were overwhelmed by them.

Public worship as yet was celebrated by every nation in its own language. A magnificent and pompous assemblage of ceremonies was prescribed by Gregory the Great at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, called the "Canon of Mass." Baptism was also administered on great festivals. In the Eastern and Western provinces an immense number of Temples were erected in honour of Saints; and every village had its church, considered as the best bulwark against temporal and spiritual enemies. To the Festivals was added that of the Purification of the "Blessed Virgin."

SEVENTH CENTURY.

DURING this century Christianity spread

with wonderful rapidity through the Heathen world, chiefly owing to the labours of those Nestorians who dwelt in Persia, Syria, and India; through them also the light of the Gospel penetrated into China in 637.

The Greeks, too much occupied with political events, paid little attention to Christianity. In the West, Augustine preached the Gospel among the Anglo-Saxons; and after his death other monks sent from Rome were so successful, that they converted the six Anglo-Saxon kings, and almost the whole population of Britain.


Many of the British, Scotch, and Irish clergy went among the Batavians, Belgians, and Germans, and erected churches in various places. Columban, an Irish monk, by his preaching extirpated all traces of Paganism in Gaul,

and diffused the Gospel among the Suevi, and Boii, the Franks, and other Germans, amongst whom he laboured until his death in 615. St. Gal, one of his companions, preached the Gospel to the Helvetii and Suevi. St. Kilian, a Scotchman, converted many of the Western Franks; and towards the conclusion of this century, the famous Willibrod, an Anglo-Saxon, with eleven of his countrymen, crossed over to Batavia, in order to convert the Frieslanders; thence they went, in 692, to Forteland—supposed to be Heligoland—to Cimbria, and Denmark. A very small number of Jews were converted during this century. The Emperor Heraclius had them baptized by violence—a deplorable method of conversion, practised also in Spain and Gaul, contrary to the wishes of the Bishop of Rome.

With the exception of those under Persian dominion, the Christians did not experience so violent persecution in this as in former centuries. In England, previous to the conversion of the six petty kings, they were much oppressed. In the Eastern countries, particularly in Syria and Palestine, they received no mercy from the Jews; they also were attacked by many enemies under the cloak of Christianity. But a new and most powerful enemy arose in Arabia in 612; this was Mahomet, an illiterate but eloquent man, who had the presumption to declare that he was commissioned by God himself to reform the religion of Jews, Arabians, and Christians. With this view he delivered a new law called the Alkoran; and by force of arms not only gained over an immense number of followers in Arabia,

but at last founded an Empire in that country. The great ignorance, besides, which prevailed throughout the East at this time favoured the schemes of this bold adventurer; considering, also, that the dissensions among all the Christians brought a thorough contempt upon their religion, we should not be surprised at the rapid progress of Mahometism. It met, however, with a great check immediately after the death of Mahomet in 632.

The universal barbarous ignorance of this century has scarcely its equal in any age. The whole learning of the times was confined to the secluded habitations of the monks, where it was just preserved from total extinction. The sciences were no longer patronized by the Kings and Princes, and even the schools, which had been under the



direction of the Bishops, were now entirely neglected. The Bishops themselves were so ignorant as to be unable to compose their own exhortations to the people, but compiled them from the writings of Augustine and Gregory. England in this respect was more fortunate, owing to the exertions of Theodore of Tarsus, Bishop of Canterbury.

In this century originated that dreadful schism, in consequence of the renewal of the dispute between the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople, by which the Greek and Latin Churches became separated.

It is supposed that the Valdenses or Vaudois had then already retired into the valleys of Piedmont, where they might better oppose the ambitious views of the Roman Pontiffs. The monks, although at this time in great repute,

were much corrupted, and contrived to fill their monasteries with the children of noble families, whose parents they prevailed upon to dedicate them to the perpetual and solitary service of God. There was a great scope for the rise of the most absurd superstitions in all parts of the Christian world, in consequence of this unlettered age, so far that they entirely superseded the simple and pure worship of God. The objects of devotion were multiplied, and nothing else appears to have occupied the minds but a certain fire which purified the soul from sin. The Holy Scriptures found few interpreters during this century. In Britain warm controversies concerning baptism, the tonsure, and the time for celebrating the Easter Festival, were carried on between the Ancient Britons and the new converts

to Christianity made among the Anglo-Saxons, without however affecting the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and entirely terminated in the following century in favour of the Anglo-Saxons. Religious rites were exceedingly augmented, chiefly by the Pontiffs of Rome. Among other rites may be mentioned a new festival in honour of the true Cross, and another in commemoration of Christ's Ascension into heaven. A most disgraceful law was also enacted by Boniface V., whereby the churches became places of refuge for criminals of all kinds. Honorius showed his zeal by the costly embellishing of sacred edifices, and by adding to the splendour and ornaments of the sacerdotal garments.

EIGHTH CENTURY.

WHILE the arms of the Mahometans were subduing all Asia, the Nestorians of Chaldea were spreading the Gospel among the Scythians or Tartars within the limits of Mount Imaus. Even in Europe almost all the Germans, with the exception of the Bavarians, were yet unenlightened by the Gospel; their conversion, however, was effected in this century by Winifred, born in England, and afterwards known as Boniface. Besides this famous prelate many others signalised themselves as preachers of the Gospel; such as Corbinian, a French Benedictine monk; Firmin, a Gaul; and Lebuin, an Englishman, who converted many of the Saxons. Christianity was at this time indebted for its propagation to a war between the Saxons and

Charlemagne in 772. This prince, after other means had been rejected by that warlike and superstitious people, ultimately forced the Saxons at the point of the sword, to be baptized. The same method was employed in the conversion of the Huns, in Pannonia. For his service to the Christian cause succeeding generations, and particularly Frederick I., Emperor of the Romans, enrolled the name of Charlemagne among the tutelary saints of the Church.

Among the principal events whereby the Christian religion suffered the greatest injury during this century, may be mentioned that dreadful controversy about the worship of images, which disturbed the Eastern Empire under Leo the Isaurian, and his son Constantine, and made it an easy prey to the ravages of the Saracens. Towards the

middle of this century, the Turks pouring forth from the deserts about Mount Caucasus, reduced in succession all the Greek provinces. In 714, the Saracens crossing the sea which divides Spain from Africa, defeated the army of Roderic, King of the Spanish Goths, and having overthrown the empire of the Visi-Goths, were ultimately defeated near Poitiers, in 732, by Charles Martel. Soon, however, they rallied, and made incursions into France, Spain, even Italy, Sardinia, and Sicily, to the great terror and detriment of these Christian countries.

So much disturbed with political convulsions was the whole of Europe, that her history exhibits little more than a perfect blank in the annals of literature. The sciences had now almost totally abandoned the Continent, and

had collected their scatterd remains in Britain and Ireland.

Both the Eastern and Western world were now filled with dissensions, among the Bishops and Doctors of the Church, who, abandoning themselves to their passions, were only distinguished by their luxury and dissipation, which they easily sustained, through immense accessions of authority and opulence from the Western nations. An opinion, prevalent among the rich, that the greatest crimes could be washed away by liberal donations to the service of God, increased the endowments of the Church and revenues of the clergy considerably. Emperors, Kings, and Princes, were now daily heaping on the Church whole provinces, cities, and castles, and conferring on them all the honours and dignities they could bestow.

These distinctions excited the arrogance of the Roman Prelates, and gave to the See of Rome that preponderance in ecclesiastical, civil, and political affairs which has almost continued to our own time. While the power of the Roman Pontiffs was thus increasing, it received a severe check from the Grecian Emperors. Leo the Isaurian, and his son Constantine Copronymus, enraged at the fanaticism of Gregory II. and III., not only curtailed their revenue, but also their ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and subjected them to the dominion of the Bishops of Constantinople. The rancorous quarrel between the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople here recommenced, and finally divided the Greek and Latin Churches.

That the chief doctrines of Christianity were still cherished, is evident

from the works of John of Damascus and Charlemagne, and from the theological writings of this age. But it is at the same time clear, that the simplicity of the Christian worship was now blended with the idolatrous worship of images, in which, together with donations, pilgrimages, and such like, the whole religion of the age consisted. The Greeks considered it sufficient if they expounded the Scriptures to their pupils, by compiling from the ancient commentators their explanatory observations. One class of the Latin expositors followed their example; the other class are more valuable, in consequence of their explanation being derived from personal inquiry.

So great was the respect of Charlemagne for the Holy Scriptures, that he was persuaded the first principles of




every art and science were contained in them ; this led him to encourage all the learned men of his country in the illustration of the Sacred Writings. No complete system of the Christian virtues was attempted ; the moral writers of this century among the Latins confining themselves to some general precepts on virtue or vice. The Greek controversy about the worship of images commenced at the beginning of this century ; while the Latins laboured to confute the doctrine of Elipand concerning the person of Christ. The rage of these violent disputes may be considered to have ceased in 794. External rites and ceremonies composed nearly the whole religion of this century. The administration of the Lord's Supper had now exchanged its beautiful simplicity for a multitude of unmeaning, absurd fop-

peries, and solitary masses became very common.

NINTH CENTURY.

CHRISTIANITY was much indebted to the illustrious Charlemagne for its present flourishing condition among the Huns, Saxons, Frieslanders, and other barbarous nations. In 828, the Gospel was successfully promulgated in Sweden by Ansgar, a monk of Westphalia, afterwards rewarded for his pious labours with the Archbishopric of Hamburg. The Mœsians, Bulgarians, Gazarians, Bohemians, and Moravians, were converted to Christianity about the middle of this century. Under the reign of Basilius the Grecian Emperor, the Slavonians, Arentani, and part of Dalmatia, sent an embassy to Constantinople, declaring their submission to the



Grecian Emperor, and conversion to Christianity. The Russians were also converted by the Grecian Patriarch Ignatius, whom Basilius sent among them.

The Saracens having become masters of almost all Asia, pushed their conquests even to India. The greater part of Africa was already under their yoke; in the West, Spain and Sardinia had submitted to their arms, and in the year 827, they took possession of Sicily. Towards the conclusion of this century they seized on several cities of Calabria, and advanced even to the walls of Rome. It may easily be perceived of what injury this growing prosperity of a nation, the bitter enemy of all Christians, was to the propagation of the Gospel. But the European Christians had another enemy to combat. The

Normans, Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, had long infested with their fleets the German Ocean, and in this century made irruptions into Germany, Britain, Friesland, and Gaul, and spreading desolation through the provinces of Spain, penetrated into Italy, where they pillaged the cities of Lucca and Pisa.

Though the political aspect of the Grecian Empire at this period was particularly unfavourable to the state of literature, yet, by the liberality of some of the Emperors, seconded by several of the Patriarchs of Constantinople, there were at this time many who excelled in different branches of literature. In England learning is particularly indebted to the illustrious King Alfred, who spared no labour to restore to the arts and sciences that glory they deserve;

but, unfortunately, the troubled state of Europe, together with the invasions of the Normans, much contributed to lessen the benefits of such efforts. Nothing can more strongly mark the corruption of all classes of ecclesiastics at this epoch than the abuses which prevailed in all the Churches, and more especially in the election of the Patriarchs of Constantinople. That important office could now only be filled through the favour of the Imperial Court, and consequently the edicts of the Emperor was sufficient to eject from the Episcopal throne any prelate. In the Western provinces the bishops had become effeminate and indolent, given up to the splendour of the Court, and rather seeking the applause of the multitude than the favour of God. The ignorance of the priesthood almost equalled their

corruption; few could either read or write, and still fewer were capable of explaining the doctrines they professed to teach. This deplorable state of the sacred order was certainly in a great measure attributable to the agitated and disturbed epoch, to the incursions of the northern barbarians, to the ignorance of the nobility, and to the wealth that flowed in upon the Churches from all quarters. Another demoralizing cause also was, the obligation many bishops and heads of monasteries were under, of performing suit and service to their sovereigns in consequence of lands and castles they held by feudal tenure, whereby they were bound to furnish a certain number of soldiers in time of war, and at their head to take the field themselves.

After the death of Louis II., a dread-

ful war breaking out between the posterity of Charlemagne, the Roman Pontiff, John VIII., and the Italian Princes, seized this opportunity for assuming to themselves the right of nominating to the Imperial throne; the Pontiffs generally elevating that man who paid them best. Thus, we see to what height the power and influence of the Prelates of Rome at length was carried, not only in religious, but in political affairs. Elated with their overgrown prosperity, they began to persuade the people that the Bishop of Rome was constituted and appointed by Jesus Supreme Legislator and Judge of the Universal Church, and that therefore all Bishops, inasmuch as they derived their authority from the Roman Pontiff, were in all things subject to him.

The monastic life had been long held

in the highest veneration by the Greeks and Eastern nations, but had only been adopted with zeal by the Latins since the beginning of this century. In the present age kings and nobles considered it the highest dignity, and abandoning their thrones and homes, devoted themselves to the service of God within the monastic cells. The Emperor Louis distinguished by peculiar marks of favour the order of Canons introduced in the last century. He instituted also an order of Canonesses, which was the first female convent known in the world.

Scarcely had the few enlightened commentators of this period ceased to breathe, when barbarism and ignorance again resumed their seats, accompanied with all kinds of follies, superstition, and errors. This deplorable revolution

in the Church of Christ was undoubtedly produced by the contentions and disputes in which the Eastern nations were engaged with the Western Churches. But other causes largely contributed towards the spreading evil, such as the unnatural lives of cloistered monks and solitary hermits, the incursions of the northern barbarians, the morbid ambition of the Roman Pontiffs, and the convulsed state of the political world.

Contemplating this universal ignorance and superstition, we must not be surprised to find every one paying divine adoration to the bones and dead bodies of saints, multiplying the number of their saintly patrons, and giving themselves up to every kind of folly and superstition. Through a solemn edict of the ecclesiastical Councils, forbidding

at last that any deceased Christian should be canonized without the authority of the Bishop, a new accession of power was given to the Roman Pontiff, vesting in him the exclusive right of canonization.

This multiplication of saints led to fresh abuses; it became necessary to write their lives, and thus the most ridiculous wonders and fables were invented.

The Grecks paid but little attention in this century to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and their writers contented themselves with compiling passages from ancient commentators. Two of the theological writers among the Latins distinguished themselves, the rest were satisfied either with collecting and arranging the expositions of others, or with deducing from every passage of

Scripture the most abstruse and fantastical significations.

We have a strong proof of the great multiplication of rites in the Church, from the number of authors who at this time began to explain it. In addition to the rites and ceremonies of this century, it may be sufficient to remark, that as new saints were added to the Church, so many new festivals were also invented, and there was no end to the costly pictures, images, and other ornaments which filled the churches. Among other additions was the feast of All-Saints, instituted by Gregory IV., and that of St. Michael.

TENTH CENTURY.

THAT this century was particularly remarkable for the ignorance and super-

stition which pervaded all parts of the Christian world, is attested by every writer of the day; and a matter of wonder it is that the expiring embers of Christianity were kept alive.

In Chaldea, the Nestorians carried the Gospel beyond Mount Imaus into Tartary, thence among the Turks or Karits, on the northern part of China. In the West, the notorious pirate, Rollo, son of a Norwegian Count, being banished from his country, collected a number of Morman banditti, and seized on one of the maritime provinces of France, from whence he plundered the whole neighbouring country. In the year 912, this chief with all his army embraced Christianity by the persuasion of Charles the Simple, who gave him his daughter Gisela, in marriage. From this Rollo descended

the noble line of Norman dukes, by whom the province of Bretagne was afterwards called Normandy. Christianity was carried into Poland by Dombrowska, daughter of Boleslaus, Duke of Bohemia, who persuaded her husband, Micislaus, Duke of Poland, to embrace the Gospel in 965. As soon as this was known to John XIII., Bishop of Rome, he dispatched into Poland, Aegidius, Bishop of Tusculum, with many other ecclesiastics, in order to second the pious efforts of the Duke, who at length, by threats and promises, succeeded in converting the whole nation; by nearly similar means the Russians universally embraced the Gospel. Wlodomir, Duke of Russia, in 961, married Anne, sister of Basilius, the second Grecian Emperor of that name, by whose entreaties he was con-

verted in 987, assuming the name of Basilus. The Russians still worship them both as saints.

At the death of Charlemagne, the faint sparks of Christianity which during his reign existed among the Hungarians and Avari, were entirely extinguished, so that Sarolta, daughter of Gylas, a Turkish chief, rekindled and finally fixed it. This princess, having married Geysa, king of Hungary, induced him to be converted. Her son, Stephen, also receiving baptism, was the means of extending it throughout the nation.

Among the Danes the Gospel experienced great opposition; but after the death of Gormon, Harald, his son, being defeated by Otho the Great, in 949, embraced Christianity, together with his

wife and son, Sueno, which led to the conversion of all the Danes.

The Norwegians received the Gospel in this century through their king, Hagen Adelsteen, who had been educated in England. His efforts had but little success; in 945, however, great numbers received the Gospel. Their final conversion was effected by Swein, king of Sweden, who conquered Norway; thence the Gospel passed into the Orkney islands, Iceland, and Greenland.

Otho the Great was chiefly instrumental in establishing the Gospel in Germany, where he erected the bishoprics of Bradenburgh, Havelberg, Meissen, Magdeburg, and Naunburg, and most profusely enriched the churches and convents.

As a proof of the great spread of Christianity, it may be mentioned, that

about this time the monarchs of Europe first began to play a holy war against the Mahometans, who were masters of Palestine. The Roman Pontiff, Sylvester II., gave the signal by an epistle in the name of the "Church of Jerusalem" to the Church universal throughout the world. This exhortation, however, remained without the least effect.

Although the Christian religion apparently experienced little persecution during this century, it was by no means in a flourishing condition, owing to the frequent apostasy of its friends to Mahometanism, which latter was embraced by the Turks, who lived on the northern coast of the Caspian Sea.

The pages referring to the Church government of this century present a most deplorable picture, where none of that dignity, once so eminently conspi-

cuous, remains. Ignorance, superstition, sensuality, and impiety, most forcibly strike the attention, and a series of revolutions in the Papal government at Rome bear melancholy testimony to the degeneracy and corruption that reigned. Just as degenerate as appears the Church government of this age, to just as sad a state were reduced the doctrines of Christianity. All the essence and spirit of religion now consisted, according to the opinions of Greek and Latin writers, in the worship of images and saints, in the veneration paid to relics, and in the accumulation of riches on the heads of priests and monks. The doctrine of the purgatory was also now propagated; asserted to be "a fire that would destroy the impurities of departed souls."

The controversies respecting predestination, grace, and the eucharist, which

had so disturbed the Church in the former century, were now reduced to silence by mutual toleration. The opinion concerning the immediate approach of the day of judgment was publicly advanced at this time; an immense number of persons, abandoning all that was dear to them in this world, repaired to Palestine where they expected to meet Christ on His seat of judgment. The terrified fled for refuge to caves and mountains; and so great was the panic at the dissolution of the universe, that the expiration of the fatal period alone could calm the terror, which originated in a passage in the Revelation of St. John.*

In proportion as were the number of saints so were the ceremonies multiplied.

* Almost all the donations bequeathed to the Church during this period begin with "appropinquante mundi termino"—at the coming end of the world.

The festival in commemoration of "all departed saints" was instituted by the authority of Odilo, Abbot of Clugni, and having been afterwards approved of by one of the Roman Pontiffs, was by his command adopted by all the Latin Churches.

Towards the conclusion of this century the Latins began the system of celebrating masses, and abstaining from flesh every Sabbath day, in honour of the Virgin Mary.

There is also great reason for placing in this century the invention of the Rosary, which consists in the fifteen repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and one hundred and fifty salutations of the Virgin. The institution of the crown is also attributed to this time; it consists of six or seven repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and six or seven times ten salutations or "Ave Marias."

ELEVENTH CENTURY.

IN the last century the Danes, Hungarians, and Russians had embraced Christianity, owing to the patronage of their princes. In Tartary and the neighbouring countries, the zealous Nestorians converted many. It appears also that metropolitan prelates were established in this century throughout the provinces of Casgar, Naucheta, Turkestan, Genda, and Tangut, now professing idolatry and Mahometanism.

Since the ninth century, Sicily had been under the yoke of the Saracens, but Robert Guiscard, who colonized a part of Italy with Normans in 1059, made an attack on them, and entirely expelled them from the island. After this success, Count Rodger, brother of Robert, not only restored the Christian

religion, but also established bishoprics, monasteries, churches, &c., throughout Sicily. As a reward the Roman Pontiff, Urban II., by a special act, conferred on him and his successors for ever, the title, authority, and prerogatives of hereditary legates of the apostolic see. The Court of Rome denied the authenticity of this act, and hence arose, in modern times, those disputes between the Bishops of Rome and the Kings of Sicily regarding the spiritual supremacy.

From the time of Sylvester II., the Roman Pontiffs had been forming plans for extending the limits of the Church in Asia, and for expelling the Mahometans from Palestine. Gregory III., actuated by the repeated complaints of the Asiatic Christians against the Saracens, resolved to undertake in person a holy war for their deliverance, and an

army of fifty thousand men was already equipped for the occasion. His dispute, however, with the Emperor Henry IV., obliged him to postpone the project, which was renewed by Peter the Hermit of Amiens, who having witnessed, in a journey through Palestine in 1093, the sufferings of the Christians, implored the aid of Symeon, Bishop of Constantinople, and of Urban II., but without effect. Far from being discouraged, he went through all the countries of Europe, exhorting to a holy war against the Infidels. Urban II. then assembled a numerous Council at Placentia in 1095, and warmly recommended the expedition. The proposal being renewed at a subsequent Council of Clermont, an immense number of French of all ages, sexes, and professions, immediately enrolled themselves for the so termed "crusade."

In 1096, separate bodies to the number of eight hundred thousand marched for Constantinople, in order to pass into Asia, under the Grecian Emperor Alexander Comnenius. Peter the Hermit headed one of the divisions; another led by Godfrey de Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, and by his brother, Baldwin, was composed of eighty thousand well chosen troops; Raimond, Earl of Toulouse, headed another column; Robert, Duke of Normandy, Hugo, brother to Philip I., King of France, embarked their troops at Brundisi and Tarento for Dyrrachium and Durazzo. Nice was the first place taken in 1097, then Antioch and Edessa; after a siege of five weeks, Jerusalem fell in 1099. Godfrey was rewarded with this city, and saluted with the title of King of Jerusalem. A year after this conquest

he died, leaving his dominions to Baldwin his brother, who assumed the title of king, which Godfrey had modestly declined. The motives which prompted the Roman Pontiffs and the Princes of Europe to this holy war, were by no means purely religious. All Europe witnessed with alarm the rapid progress of the Turks, in power and conquest, consequently measures and an excuse for stopping their career were required. To say nothing of the justice or injustice of these wars, it is well known that Europe was nearly depopulated, her wealth exhausted, her most noble families annihilated, and her morals most lamentably corrupted. Moreover, during the absence of legions of bishops and abbots on these military excursions, the priests and monks at home threw off all restraint, their flocks were deserted,

ignorance grew apace, and with it every kind of superstition.

In this century the Turks and Saracens were the greatest enemies to Christianity; but, fortunately, their injury was diminished through continual wars with each other.

A certain number of Danes, Hungarians, Prussians, Lithuanians, and Obotriti, with other nations in Europe, still retained their idolatrous rites, and evinced their enmity to Christians by the most shocking excesses.

An increasing thirst after knowledge suddenly changed the face of Europe, and the most barbarous nations becoming more polished, we find schools and seminaries everywhere erecting. The Roman Pontiffs, about the commencement of this century, first assumed the title of Masters of the World, and Popes

or Universal Fathers. From the time of Leo IX., they had used every means to become the lords of the universe, arbitrators of the fate of Empires, and supreme rulers over Kings. But their ambition was opposed by the Emperors, by the Kings of France, and by William the Conqueror, and hence followed continual stratagems and subterfuges, aiming at supremacy on one side, and efforts to repress it on the other

No sooner did Hildebrand—known by the title of Gregory VII., one of the most ambitious pontiffs, raised to the pontificate in 1073—find himself firmly seated in the Papal chair, when he did all in his power to subject the “Universal Church” to the government of the Pontiff alone, to exclude the Emperors and Kings from all jurisdiction over the clergy, and even to render them and

their dominions tributary to the See of Rome. His views went farther ; they aimed also at the establishment of a civil despotism, by forming at Rome an assembly of Bishops, who should be umpires in all disputes between states and kingdoms, and by whom was to be determined the fate of empires and nations. This ambitious project was vigorously opposed by the Emperors, and particularly by the Kings of France and England.

At a Council at Rome in 1074, amongst others, the law concerning the celibacy of priests was decreed. At another Council, summoned by Gregory at Rome in 1075, he excommunicated many German and Italian Bishops, and pronounced in a formal edict "anathema against whoever received the investiture of a Bishopric or Abbacy from the hands

of a layman, as also against those performing the Investiture.”

This severe law much incensed Henry IV., the German Emperor, and led to a declaration of war. Henry, however, abandoned by his expected allies, and unable to stand against so many enemies, in the rigour of Winter across the Alps, thence passing in 1077 into Italy, arrived at Canusium, where the Pontiff resided, and, unmindful of his dignity, stood for three days in the open air, at the gate of the fortress, with his feet bare, his head uncovered, supplicating absolution, which he obtained on the fourth day. This act of pusillanimity caused Henry's deposition, and led to another war, which was protracted almost throughout this century.

Though ignorance, superstition, and corruption predominated among all

classes of society, yet we find, from the days of Gregory VII., many proofs of zeal in such pious Christians as adhered to the pure religion amid the spreading superstition. Their intentions obviously were most laudable, but for the most part ill-directed. By avoiding, with more enthusiasm than prudence, certain defects and abuses, they treated with the utmost contempt all the external part of worship. The Roman Pontiffs having fully established their authority in all the Western provinces, began to introduce into the Churches of those provinces their own ceremonies and form of worship.

TWELFTH CENTURY.

THE worship of idols was now chiefly confined to the northern parts of Europe.

Boleslaus, Duke of Poland, imposed on the Pomeranians, as his condition of peace, their adoption of the Christian religion. Adalbert was the first bishop of Pomerania. The Sclavonians and inhabitants of the Island of Rugen were indebted for the light of the Gospel to Waldemar I., King of Denmark. The Finlanders in like manner were converted by the sword of Eric IX., King of Sweden, and admitted among them as their instructor, Henry, Archbishop of Upsala.

A revolution in Asiatic Tartary, which happened about the beginning of this century, proved very beneficial to the Christian cause.

The new Kingdom of Jerusalem, which had been erected by the crusaders, seemed to be very flourishing at the opening of this epoch; but when the

Mahometans observed the number of their enemies decreased, and those that remained divided into factions, they resumed their courage and attacked them on all sides. The Christians maintained their ground for some years, but began to be discouraged as soon as Edessa had been retaken, and Antioch was menaced. Their application for assistance from Europe met first with great opposition, until at last, Louis VII., King of France, and Conrad III, Emperor of Germany, at the head of a large army, in 1147, set out for Palestine; the greatest part of their troops however, perished before they reached Jerusalem, by various causes. The year after their arrival in Palestine, when leading back into Europe the miserable remains of their army, Saladin, Sultan of Egypt, and Syria, every-

where attacked the Christians, and in 1187 reduced Jerusalem under his power. A third expedition was undertaken in 1189, by Frederic I., Emperor of Germany, surnamed Barbarossa, who with an immense army marched into Lesser Asia, from whence he invaded Syria. In passing over the river Saleph of Saleucia, he was, however, unfortunately drowned; his son, Frederic, elected in his place, with the greatest part of his army, soon after died of a pestilence, and the remnant returned to their country. In the year 1190, Philip Augustus, King of France, and Richard Cœur de Lion, King of England, following the example of Frederic I., with a powerful fleet sailed to Palestine. After a successful campaign, having defeated Saladin, Richard being deserted by the French and Italians, concluded,

in 1192, a truce with Saladin for three years and then evacuated with all his army, the Holy Land.

From these wars originated three famous military orders, whose office it was to destroy robbers, to harass infidels, and to protect the poor and weak. The first of these orders was that of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who derived their name from an hospital in Jerusalem for the support of Pilgrims. When Palestine was finally lost, these Knights retired to the Island of Cyprus, afterwards took possession of Rhodes, whence being driven by the Turks, they fled to Malta.

The second order was that of the Knights Templars, so called from a palace in which they resided, near the Temple of Jerusalem. These Knights, having outstepped their authority, their privi-

leges granted to them in the Council of Troyes were revoked, and their order suppressed by a decree of the Pope.

The third order, the Teutonic Knights' of St. Mary of Jerusalem, was formed during the siege of Ptolemais, by certain charitable merchants, of Bremen and Lubeck. Their rule was to devote themselves to the service of the sick and wounded: none but Germans of noble birth were admitted. After their retreat from Palestine, these Knights took possession of Prussia, Courland, and Semigallen, where they yet retain some of their possessions.

The progress of Christianity in the West was now unconfined, because its enemies were but few. In the East the Saracens yet persecuted its professors. In the northern parts of Asia its progress

was greatly impeded by the victories of Genghiz-Khan, Emperor of Tartary. Turkey, India, and the provinces of Carthy, were soon conquered by the victorious Tartar, who afterwards extended his arms to Persia, and Arabia, where he overturned the Saracen dominion. From this period the Christian cause began to decline in those countries, and ultimately sank under the oppression of the Mahometans.

The Roman Pontiffs, by no means satisfied with the spread of their temporal power, were continually manœuvring to extend it, at the expense of the Imperial authority. The princes of Europe, on the other hand, as strenuously endeavoured to oppose this growing power.

Consequent violent dissensions were productive of the most pernicious effects

to all Europe, and caused almost continual disputes and belligerent attitudes throughout this century. To such a degree was Christianity deformed, against such a host of enemies had it to contend, that its preservation is really surprising.

The Roman Pontiffs, the priests and monks, the scholastic doctors and the mystics, all contributed to obscure the doctrines of the Gospel, by a profane mixture of their own inventions and interpretations. Hence, as a natural consequence, the grossest superstition and ignorance prevailed, the adoration of relics increased, and the number of saints was multiplied.

The Bishops now began to grant the power of purchasing the remission of the penalties imposed upon sinners by a sum of money. The abbots and monks, who

were not qualified to grant these indulgences, raised money by exhibiting the bodies and relics of saints at fixed prices. The Roman Pontiffs, perceiving the great profit derived from the sale of indulgences, began to assume this commerce exclusively to themselves, and not only remitted the penalties against sinners, but pretended to abolish even the punishments of a future state.

This century was almost deluged with expositors and interpreters of the Scriptures, but in general of a very contemptible description, and the ancient conflict between "faith and reason" was unfortunately revived.

The rites and ceremonies used in Divine worship were now exceedingly multiplied in the Greek Church, and the same passion for the introduction of new observances had crept into all the Eastern Churches.

As for the Latin ritual, among the many additions during this century, was, in 1138, that of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

IN the northern parts of Asia and China, notwithstanding the oppressive conduct of the Tartars, we find Christianity acquiring considerable repute. Subsequently many Tartars were converted, and churches erected in various parts of Tartary and China.

The Christian cause was now daily declining in Palestine; this, therefore, to say nothing of wordly motives, induced Innocent III. to excite to war; and after some time certain French nobles, making an alliance with Venice,



set sail with an army for Constantinople in 1203, and took that city by assault, restoring Isaac Angelus to the throne, which his brother Alexius had usurped. In 1261, however, ended the empire of the Franks in Constantinople.


In 1217, during the Pontificate of Honorius III., the Italians and Germans undertook another crusade joined by Andrew, King of Hungary, Leopold, Duke of Austria, Louis of Bavaria, and many other princes. Damietta, the strongest city in Egypt, was taken; but in the next year the Saracens destroyed the joined fleet, and re-took Damietta.

Frederic II., in consequence of the remonstrances of the Court of Rome, at the head of a new army set sail for Palestine, where he concluded a treaty of peace with Melicamel, Sultan of

Egypt, by which, in 1229, the Kingdom of Jerusalem was made over to him.

This expedition was followed by many others of less importance, but still the Christian cause remained in a most deplorable condition, which caused Louis IX., King of France, to bring a formidable army into Egypt. His first attempts were successful; soon, however, calamities followed, and Louis himself was led to captivity, from which after four years he returned to France. Undaunted by his defeat, Louis again set sail for Africa with an immense army, and took possession of Carthage. A pestilence at Tunis, destroying the greatest part of his army, Louis himself perished.

No other European Monarch ever engaged in a Holy War; and consequently the Latin Empire in the East began to



decline, and in 1291, after the capture of Acre by the Mahometans, was entirely overthrown.


Some of the Western nations still worshipped idols, particularly the Prussians; their obstinacy induced Conrad, Duke of Massovia, to engage the Knights of the Teutonic order to undertake their conquest and conversion, which they effected after a war of fifty years. In Spain the Christian cause was in a most flourishing state.

The Popes forgetting their real position, aimed at nothing but absolute and unlimited dominion, disregarding all human and divine laws. In order to establish their authority in civil and ecclesiastical matters, they assumed in this century to themselves the power of disposing of all benefices, and of creating bishops, abbots, and canons, at their

own pleasure. Innocent III. was the first to arrogate to himself this great authority; his example was followed by Honorius III., Gregory IX., and others. The Bishops, and more especially the Kings of England and France, warmly opposed these usurpations. Many instances might be mentioned of the insults and indignities towards the princes of Europe, especially by Innocent III., of whom none felt them more severely than John, surnamed Sansterre, King of England. This prince opposed the Pontiff in his orders to the monks of Canterbury for electing Stephen Langton, a Roman Cardinal of English origin, notwithstanding the election of John de Grey had previously been confirmed by the King. The indignant monarch expelled the monks of Canterbury for having obeyed the Pontiff's order. The

consequence of this was an interdict from Innocent, by which the churches were all shut, the administration of the Sacrament suspended, and excommunication against the person of the king pronounced. About four years after, in a Council of Cardinals, John was solemnly deposed, and Philip Augustus, King of France, advised to invade England. On the other hand, King John assembled his troops, and was about to commence hostilities, when Randolph, the Pope's delegate, arrived in Dover, and terrified the monarch into submission.

The pages referring to the reign of the Pontiffs, as in the two last centuries, offer the same outrageous ambition, excommunication, tumults, and dissensions, little calculated to establish peace to the Church and true religion.



Several new monastic orders were founded during this period, amongst which the order of Dominicans and Franciscans became the most conspicuous in maintaining the prerogatives of the See of Rome, and in preparing the way to the reformation of the Church.

It is scarcely necessary to quote, that religion was in a most deplorable state; fanaticism, superstition, heresy, and divisions, usurping the place of the simple, pure, and peaceful doctrines of Christ. The general state of religion may be imagined from the imposition of the "New Articles of Faith," by Innocent III., at the fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215. In these Articles, this imperious Pontiff determined the manner in which the body and blood of Christ were present in the Eucharist. The use of the term "Transubstantiation,"

and the introduction of "Auricular Confession," originated also with this Pontiff.

The expositors of the Scriptures in this century, adopted nearly the same method of interpretation as those of the preceding times. They almost universally pretended to draw some hidden and mysterious sense from their own imagination. The greatest part of these doctors took Aristotle as their model in illustrating the—by no means philosophical—doctrines of Christianity.

Though many persons of eminent piety, and among them even some of the Roman Pontiffs, reprobated the prevailing method of teaching theology, yet such was the rage for philosophical abstraction and logical subtilty, that the number of Biblicists diminished from day to day. The Universities of Oxford

and Paris combated with each other with great spirit, the former in defence of the Biblicists, the latter of the Scholastics. The public edict of the Roman Pontiffs, and the private commands of the monastic orders, were daily adding to the ceremonies and rites of the Church, so that the whole external worship of God was nothing better than a scenic representation of pomp, and a variety of theatrical exhibitions.

About the conclusion of this century, Boniface VIII. added the famous Jubilee, at which, by visiting the church of St. Peter every hundredth year, remission of sins was obtained. His successors extended its celebration to every twenty-fifth year. During the whole of this century, the several Popes persecuted indiscriminately all those whom



they denominated heretics. The number of these malcontents with the Church of Rome was nowhere greater than in Narbonne, Gaul, where they were protected by Raymond, sixth Earl of Toulouse. As soon as Innocent III. was informed of this, he sent legates into those parts with full power to destroy the heretics. Thus originated that odious tribunal called "The Inquisition," which in process of time was erected in every part of Europe. So sensible were the Pontiffs of the services of these Inquisitors, that they established them in all cities suspected of heresy, under the jurisdiction of one priest and three laymen. At first this inquisitorial court resembled a court of common law; the Dominicans, however, soon converted it into a tribunal of penance.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

IN the years 1307 and 1308, Clement V. urged the renewal of the Crusades, so did John XXII. Under the Pontificate of Benedict XII., Philip, King of France, raised a large army for that purpose, but being threatened with invasion by England, he was obliged to desist. Many other attempts were made by several princes of Europe to renew the war in Palestine, but none were carried into effect. In China and Tartary the success of the Missionaries was very great in propagating the Christian religion. Clement V. in 1307, erected Peking, the capital of China, into an Archbishopric, and sent there seven other Bishops. John XXII. was also instrumental in establishing Christianity among the Tartars and Chinese.

The only unconverted European Prince in this century was Iagello, Duke of Lithuania; he, however, was persuaded to receive baptism in 1386, when he took the name of Vladislaus.

In consequence of the continued enmity between the Jews and Christians, we find in this century that many were compelled by fire and sword to embrace the Gospel of Christ.

In Spain the Saracens yet maintained great power, and carried on a perpetual war with the Kings of Castile, Arragon, and Navarre, in which they were always assisted by the Emperors of Morocco. The Roman Pontiffs therefore exerted all their influence towards expelling these barbarians from Spain, and their efforts were almost crowned with success.

The labours of the Christian Mission-

aries in the provinces of Asia, began unfortunately to lose ground, in consequence of the spreading conquests of the Turks and Tartars who everywhere substituted the religion of Mahomet. Many of the Tartars had formerly professed Christianity; but from the beginning of this century, following the example of their Emperor, Timour Beg, commonly called Tamerlane, they universally received the Koran.

There are no accounts later than the year 1370, of any members of the Latin Church residing in those parts of Asia which the Chinese, Tartars, and Monguls inhabited; thus proving a total extirpation of the Christian religion in those countries.

All orders of the priesthood appear to have been in a dreadful state of corruption, but none more than those of the

Latin Church, where the exorbitant power of the Popes prevented that reform which many pious men were wishing to effect. The dominion of the Popes became, however, gradually weakened by unexpected events, and, in the first place, particularly by a quarrel between Boniface VIII., and Philip, King of France, about the beginning of this century.

Philip replied with great spirit to a very haughty letter from Boniface, in which the most abject submission to the Court of Rome had been stipulated. This produced a bill of excommunication against the King, and in return from Philip a public accusation of heresies and simony. Philip went farther; he sent William de Nogaret into Italy, to seize the Pope; this being effected at Anagni, but with a certain degree of

severity and inhumanity, the inhabitants rescued Boniface, and conducted him to Rome, where soon after he died of grief.

After the death of Benedict XI., the successor of Boniface, Philip, by 'intrigue obtained the See of Rome for a French Prelate, Bertrand de Got, who took the name of Clement V., and removed the Papal residence to Avignon, in France, where it continued for seventy years. This prolonged residence of the Popes in France, conduced more than anything else towards the diminution of the Papal authority, and contributed considerably to decrease the revenues of the Pontiffs. Thus we see the Gallican Popes resort to the more frequent sale of indulgences and to the most odious tributes and exactions. All Europe complained, and a general

hatred was excited against the See of Rome. On the death of Clement V., great contentions arose between the French and Italians. The former prevailed, and elected James d'Euse, of Cahors, in 1316, who took the name of John XXII. This Pontiff, proud, weak, and imprudent, entered into an unhappy war against Louis of Bavaria.

About the year 1331, John incurred the displeasure of the whole Catholic Church, for publicly asserting some strange doctrines respecting the intermediate state of the soul. After his death, in 1334, fresh disputes arose regarding the right of election, and not only continued but increased at the death of Gregory XII., when the union of the Latin Church was dissolved, and followed by the "Great Western Schism." To such a height were the dissensions

carried, that the Church had two or three heads at the same time. Notwithstanding the great calamities, this schism was eventually productive of immense benefits, because it was the means of inflicting a mortal wound on the Papal power, and of recovering for the monarchs that temporal authority which the Church had gradually wrenched from them.

Every country and university in Europe now commenced a general hostility against the turbulent Dominicans and Franciscans, and the mendicant orders of monks. In England the University of Oxford resolutely opposed the Dominicans; while Richard Archbishop of Armagh, and others, attacked the mendicant orders. Among all the opponents to the latter, none acquired such celebrity as John Wickliff, Pro-

fessor of Divinity, and head of Baliol College in the University of Oxford. In the year 1360, he, first of all, defended the statutes and privileges of his University against the mendicants, and had the courage to reprove even their patrons the Popes. The monks commenced a prosecution against him at the Court of Gregory XI., who ordered Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, to examine the matter in a Council held at London. Through the interest of the Duke of Lancaster, Wickliff escaped this danger; although in two Councils held afterwards in Oxford and London, by William de Courtney, Archbishop of Canterbury, of twenty-three of his opinions ten were condemned as heresies, and thirteen as errors. He removed in safety to the Rectory of Lutterworth, where, in 1387, he died in peace.

The opposition which the mendicants thus experienced did not however, reform them; the Franciscans, in particular, continued to support their strange opinions, and even maintained that their founder was a second Christ.

From the year 1329, the rage of the contending parties considerably subsided, in consequence of the pacific measures adopted by the Popes Benedict and Clement VI.

The Waldenses and others, who were desirous of a reformation in the Church, now daily acquired strength and reputation in all parts of Europe. They began to withdraw themselves from the jurisdiction of the Pope, and in consequence of severe persecution, fled from Italy, France, and Germany, and settled in Bohemia.

Most of the Latin doctors engaged in

didactic theology followed the rules of peripatetic philosophy. Such a system of expounding the Scriptures soon produced the warmest controversies in the Universities of Oxford and Paris between the philosophical and biblical party. A furious controversy also arose at Paris in 1384, between that University and the Dominicans.

The most prominent change in the ritual of the Church was the celebrating of the Jubilee, which in 1350, by desire of Clement VI., was commanded to be held twice in the century, instead of only once.

Innocent V. instituted also festivals sacred to the memory of the lance, nails, and crown of thorns, used at the crucifixion of Christ. Benedict appointed a festival in honour of the marks of Christ's wounds.

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

IF an external profession of Christianity may be considered as constituting a Christian, this century can boast of a great number of converts which were added to the Church. Ferdinand, surnamed the Catholic, by the conquest of Granada in 1492, completely destroyed the power of the Saracens or Moors in Spain; he then issued a decree of banishment against the Jews, who, to avoid the execution of it, pretended to receive the Gospel.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus opened the way to America by his discovery of the Islands of Hispaniola, Cuba, and Jamaica; after him Americus Vesputius of Florence, landed on that vast continent. It is unnecessary to mention that these discoveries led to the

introduction of Christianity into these remote parts of the globe.

Towards the conclusion of this century, the Portuguese, had penetrated as far as Æthiopia and the Indies, and succeeded, in 1491, in converting to Christianity, together with their king, the inhabitants of Congo, in Africa.

The barbarous proceedings of the Turks and Tartars had now nearly obliterated every trace of Christianity in the East. In China alone, the Nestorians preserved some faint remains of the Gospel.

The overthrow of the Greek Empire was a new source of calamities to the Christians in Europe and Asia. The Turks, headed by Mahomet II., having taken Constantinople in 1453, entirely suppressed Christianity in that quarter, though the Turks tolerated the pro-

fessors of it during the whole of this century; this religious toleration was, however, considerably diminished under the reign of Selim I., who imposed the most severe restrictions upon the Christian worship.

Literature of every kind languished under the barbarism of the Mahometans. Among the Latins the arts and sciences recovered their ancient lustre, many of the Popes becoming their patrons, as also the noble family of the Medicis, in Italy, Alphonso VI., King of Naples, and the other Neapolitan monarchs. Hence the number of schools increased, and libraries were founded in Germany, France, and Italy; but nothing tended so much to the improvement of literature as the valuable discovery of the art of printing by Laurent Coster, of Haarlem, improved about 1440 at Mentz, by John Guttenburg.

Notwithstanding this ameliorated state of learning, the degeneracy of the ministers of the Gospel during this period cannot be viewed without some grief, and, indeed, not without a conviction that nothing less than some signal interposition of Divine Providence could save the Christian Church from total destruction.

In order to reconcile the factions which divided the Church, and to settle their disputes, John XXIII., by the entreaties of the Emperor Sigismund, was induced to summon a Council at Constance, in 1414, whereat it was solemnly decreed that the Pope was subject to a General Assembly of the Universal Church, and that John XXIII. should be degraded from the Pontificate in consequence of his depraved morals.

Previous to the meeting of the Coun-

cil serious commotions were raised in Bohemia by John Huss, of Prague, a man of great learning and sanctity. For openly recommending the writings and opinions of Wickliff, he first was excommunicated, and afterwards summoned before a council at Constance, and condemned to be burnt alive. This torturous death he endured with the utmost fortitude in 1415; the year following his intimate friend, Jerome, of Prague, shared the same fate. The same Council, before the condemnation of Huss, decreed that the writings and remains of Wickliff should be committed to the flames. Their attention next was directed to effect a reformation in the Church; but so numerous were the obstacles, that after having sat three years and a half, they were dissolved, in 1418, without attaining their chief object.

At a Council summoned five years after at Basel, by Martin V., the two great points of deliberation were:— First, the union of the Latin and Greek Churches; secondly, the reformation of the Church, universally and particularly.

The first step taken was to assert the supremacy of General Councils; next a Confession of Faith was read, which every Pontiff was to subscribe on the day of his election. The number of Cardinals was reduced to twenty-four. These measures so incensed Eugenius VI., the successor of Boniface, that, after a long dispute, he attempted to dissolve the Council. This the Council treated with contempt; and by the sanction of the Emperor, the King of France, and other Princes, summoned the Pope before them at Basel, when,

refusing to appear, a sentence of contumacy was pronounced against him.

Eugenius upon this opened a Council of his own at Ferrara, when he put forth an act of excommunication against the Council; the latter solemnly deposing the Pope, elected Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, who took the name of Felix V.

Thus was that unfortunate schism, which had been terminated at Constance, again revived, Eugenius being supported by the greater part of the Church, while Felix was acknowledged as Pontiff by the University of Paris, and in several kingdoms and provinces.

Under Nicholas V., (the successor of Eugenius, who died, 1447), a man of learning and moderation, peace was restored to the Church by the voluntary resignation of Felix, and by the universal approbation expressed by the Coun-

oil of Basel of the election of Nicholas. So general was become the degeneracy of religion, that nothing but the most ardent efforts of a few wise and excellent men could possibly stem the torrent of immorality.

In England and Scotland, the disciples of Wickliff; in Italy, the famous Savanarola; and in other parts of Europe, the Waldenses, had the courage to elevate publicly their voice against the Pontiffs. In Bohemia the fate of Huss excited such indignation that his followers leagued themselves in open war against the power of the Pope.

Among the Greeks, the substance of religion had now yielded most completely to the frivolous and shadowy pageantry of pompous rites, which were already excessively multiplied. In the Latin Church every Pontificate was dis-

tinguished by some particular addition to the external institutions of religion.

The commentators on Scripture were so very inferior during this century as to deserve no notice. The scholastic divines and moralists became so insignificant in point of character, that they soon brought on themselves, and on their system of Education, contempt and hatred. The obstinacy of the Greek Patriarchs still prolonged the unfortunate schism between them and the Latin Church, notwithstanding the efforts made by many Roman Pontiffs, and particularly by Nicholas V., to effect a reconciliation.

Calixtus III., in order to commemorate the deliverance of Belgrade from Mahomet II., ordered, in 1456, the festival in honour of the transfiguration of Christ to be religiously observed in

the West. The additional festivals instituted in honour of the Virgin Mary, are too numerous to be mentioned.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE whole body of the Christian Church about the commencement of this century enjoyed comparative tranquility; for all the commotions of the preceding century raised by the Hussites, Waldenses, &c., were suppressed in a great measure by the hand of power. This repose, however, did by no means reconcile the wiser part of mankind to the despotism of the Pontiffs, or to the deplorable state of morality and religion. From the prince to the peasant all publicly demanded a reformation of the Church; but as long as the power of

the Pope was held sacred as derived from heaven, their complaints were ineffectual.

The sale of Indulgences was still carried on with great profit; yet this wealth, and all the power acquired did not in the least increase the reputation of the infallibility of the Popes. Thus we see that the Councils of Constance and Basel had long since asserted their own supremacy, and had prepared the public mind for some signal reformation in the Church. To the latter Erasmus much contributed, by dispelling through his ever admired writings the darkness and superstition of the age.

The state of learning in the public schools may be understood when we know that their chief places in them were held by mendicant monks. The state of theology was but little better,

as may be proved by the inability of any divine to dispute with or oppose the doctrine of Luther upon a scripture foundation.

The public worship of God was now no more than a pompous routine of external ceremonies; and the sermons contained little else than fictitious reports of miracles, fables, and a mass of extravagances, to which were sometimes added exhortations for endowments of monasteries, &c. We cannot, therefore, be astonished at the incredible ignorance in religious matters which pervaded all ranks and all countries, not to speak of the general immorality.

While thus the hopes of pious Christians were reduced to the utmost despair, Martin Luther, a native of Eisleben, in Saxony, and professor of divinity at Wittenberg, in 1517, suddenly arose,

and laid the foundation of the memorable Reformation. Leo X. at this time held the Pontificate, Maximilian I. was Emperor of Germany, and Frederic the Wise, Elector of Saxony.

The first opportunity which Luther embraced for showing his sentiments, was at the time when Tetzal began to proclaim those famous Indulgences of Leo X., which could remit every past, present, and future sin. Unable to suppress his indignation, Luther publicly maintained at Wittenburg, in 1517, the wickedness of such proceedings. He avowed that the Pope had power to remit human punishment, but denied that his power extended to the remission of divine punishment, which could alone be removed by the merits of Christ. These sentiments were received with enthusiasm by the greater part of Ger-

many. Tetzel at once came forward in support of his functions, and with several others violently attacked Luther, who most nobly maintained his ground, and refuted all their objections. Leo, informed of the importance of this controversy, summoned Luther before him at Rome. Luther's case, however, belonging to the jurisdiction of a German tribunal, according to the interference of Frederic the Wise, the Pope ordered a justification at the Diet of Augsburg, where Luther repaired; but finding his judge, Cardinal Cajetan, inaccessible to argument, he suddenly withdrew.

It is needless to allude to the various controversies and hostilities arising from Luther's opposition to the Papal authority, or to enumerate the machinations and efforts of his numerous revengeful enemies; let it suffice to mention, that

shortly after the commencement of these disputes Leo X., by the proposal of Frederic the Wise, consented that Luther should be arraigned before a Germanic Diet, held at Worms, in 1521, the issue of which was the condemnation of the accused. Frederic, however, foreseeing the latter, previously conveyed Luther for safety to the castle of Wartenburg, whence, after a concealment of ten months, he again unexpectedly appeared on the stage of the Reformation. Luther's secession from the Church in the year 1520, after he had committed to the flames a bull of excommunication and other decrees of the Pope, and the foundation of the Lutheran Church upon principles consistent with the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, may be looked upon as the natural consequence of the severe

measures to which recourse was had in order to force Luther to retract his opinions.

In the meantime, the authority of the Pope, as in Germany, so also in Switzerland, received a deadly blow from Ulric Zuingli, a canon of Zurich, who, with just reason, contends with Luther for the honour of being the first promoter of the Reformation. The name of Philip Melancthon, professor of Greek at Wittemberg, a man of learning and moderation, and an intimate friend of Luther, ought not to be omitted here.

Soon after Luther's rupture with Rome, one of his disciples, Olaus Petri, propagated the reformed religion in Sweden, seconded by King Gustavus Vasa Ericson, with so much success, that the Papal dominion in Sweden was entirely overthrown, and Gustavus

declared head of the Church. In Denmark, the Reformation was received as early as 1521, through Christian II.

Margaret, Queen of Navarre, encouraged many learned men to propagate the doctrines of the Reformation in France. About this period, the famous Calvin began to attract public attention. He was born at Noyon, in Picardy, in 1509, and began early to perceive the necessity of reform in religious doctrines and worship.

Before the Diet of Augsburg opened in 1530, the Reformation had made but little progress among the other nations of Europe, though some slight traces may be found in the annals of Spain, Hungary, Bohemia, England, Poland, and the Netherlands.

At the Diet alluded to, the famous act, known under the name of the

“Confession of Augsburg,” signed by the Protestant princes was very advantageous to Luther’s cause, as it convinced men of the purity of his intentions. This Confession contains twenty-eight chapters, whereof twenty-one point out the religious opinions of the Protestants, the others detail the errors of the Church of Rome. The Papists drew up a refutation of this Confession, which, however, by no means did convince the Assembly.


The succeeding religious disputes could only be settled in three ways:—by religious toleration, by the sword, or by mutual concession. Several attempts at pacification and reconciliation failing, the Emperor Charles V., in conjunction with Paul and other enemies of reformation, then determined to have recourse to the force of arms and authority of

edicts. On the other hand, the Landgrave of Hesse and the Electors of Saxony, as Protectors of the Protestant cause immediately raised an army for their defence. At this crisis, Luther died at Eisleben in 1546.

The unhappy war and hostilities which followed, with varying success on both sides, were not terminated till the year 1555, by that so called "religious peace," which secured to the Protestant on the surest foundation the free exercise of their religion. About the middle of this century, all the French Churches entered into a bond of union with the Church of Geneva. The French Protestants, called by their enemies the Huguenots, were persecuted with barbarous fury; even the peace granted them by Henry III., in 1576, produced that civil war in which the house of

Guise, instigated by the Pope, aimed at the extirpation of the royal family, and annihilation of the Protestant religion.

The prudence of Henry IV. at length calmed these commotions; sacrificing the dictates of his conscience, he openly embraced the Roman Catholic religion. At the same time, by the famous edict of Nantes, issued in 1598, he granted to his protestant subjects the uncontrolled exercise of their religion, and secured to them the full enjoyment of their civil rights. Henry VIII., King of England, was at first an enemy to the doctrines of Luther; but being desirous of repudiating his wife, Catherine of Arragon, in order that he might marry Anne Boleyn, he applied to the Roman Pontiff for a bill of divorce. Tired with the delay, Henry, by the advice of Thomas Cranmer, referred the matter to the Universi-



tics, who decided in his favour; and soon afterwards he was declared by his Parliament and people, "supreme head on earth of the Church of England."

This event, as might have been expected, was not productive of much benefit to the cause of Reformation, because Henry still retained the greater part of the Papal errors, together with an imperious and persecuting spirit, which the prudence and learning of Cranmer tended to counteract.

When thus the friends of the Reformation in England deplored their misfortunes, during this memorable period for Germany, Henry VIII., in the year 1547, died, and was succeeded by his only son Edward VI., a prince of great wisdom and virtue, and a firm friend to the Protestant cause. In the midst of his labours for the restoration of genuine

religion in England, he was unfortunately interrupted and carried off by death in 1553. His sister Mary, succeeding to the British throne, reinstated Popism with all its accompaniments of tortures, fire, and sword, and among a host of other victims of her bigotry, may be mentioned the famous Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Bishops Ridley and Latimer, who were all burnt at Oxford in 1555. Her successor, the youthful and illustrious Elizabeth, re-established Protestantism in England as well as in Ireland.

In Scotland the seed of the Reformation had long been sown, though its growth was impeded by the terror of inhuman laws. The first and most determined enemy of Popery here was John Knox, a disciple of Calvin, who, in 1559, transferred from Geneva to Scotland


that form of ecclesiastical government called Presbyterian.

Soon after the establishment of the Reformation in England, the Provinces of Belgium broke their allegiance to the Roman Pontiff: this brought forth that long and sanguinary war, in which the Duke of Alva, sent there by Philip II., King of Spain, with a large army, distinguished himself by his barbarities. Finally, a powerful union of all the Provinces of the Netherlands took place, and the bravery of William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, assisted by France and England, delivered this State from the Spanish dominion.

After the rupture between Luther and the Pope, the doctrines of the Reformation made considerable progress in Spain and Italy, particularly in the territories of Venice, Tuscany, and

Naples, which occasioned great discords.

As soon as the Roman Pontiffs discovered that the Reformation was curtailing their temporal dominions, they directed their views to other parts of the world. The famous Society, which in 1540, took the name of Jesuits, being intrusted with this commission, a certain number of Missionaries were constantly sent into Africa, Asia, and America, where they executed with the greatest zeal and fidelity their orders, although with little effect, their efforts being more directed towards promoting the ambitious views of Rome, than towards the propagation of the Christian religion. On the other hand, the Protestants of Europe, in 1556, sent Missionaries from Geneva to America. From England, also, Protestant colonies went to the northern parts of America, and trans-



planted with themselves their principles.

Having thus given a condensed account of the leading features of the Reformation, its origin and progress, it appears necessary, in order to have a just and clear view of the Lutheran Church, to consider its history under three distinct periods. First, from the commencement of the Reformation to the death of Luther in 1546; secondly from the death of Luther to that of Melancthon, which happened in 1560; and thirdly, from that period to the end of the century.

During its first period, the Lutheran Church, although much troubled with certain fanatics, and its enemies, enjoyed great tranquillity, owing to the vigilance and advice of Luther, during his life; after his death, Philip Melancthon was placed at the head of the Lutheran



Church. Of a mild and yielding disposition, Melancthon by no means possessed the courage and firmness of Luther. On many points he differed with Luther, and now openly manifested his opinions, which he had previously concealed. Discord and contentions soon followed, and the rise of numerous divisions may be dated from the year 1548. The doctrines of Calvin, and his famous controversy concerning Predestination, unfortunately augmented these disputes, and resulted in the foundation of the Calvinistical or Reformed Church, essentially differing from every other. Its several branches are united by neither the same system of doctrine, mode of worship, nor form of Government, and yet anarchy and schism are kept out of it by that general spirit of equity and toleration which actuates the whole system.

Ulric Zuingle, a native of Switzerland, was the first who professed principles upon which the Reformed Church is based, and may be therefore justly termed its founder. He aimed particularly at establishing in his country a form of worship from which he excluded everything that might affect "the external senses."

Among other advantages which religion derived from the restoration of letters in Europe during this century, may be mentioned the exclusion of illiterate men from the duties of the Christian ministry, which was now for the first time sanctioned by law.

The power and splendour of the Church of Rome began considerably to decline as soon as Luther and other Reformers came forward, for even those States and Princes who still adhered to

the Roman Liturgy, changed their opinions with respect to the claims and pretensions of its Bishops.

Alarmed at their declining power, the Roman Pontiffs began to exert themselves most actively in extending the limits of their Church beyond Europe, as before mentioned. At home, they revised and corrected the laws of the Inquisition; erected in many places schools for such as might hereafter enter the lists of controversy in their defence; prohibited the circulation of such books as tended to throw contempt on their authority, and did all they could to destroy and to prevent many perfect interpretations of Scripture. With this view, the old Latin translation of the Bible, called the Vulgate, which abounds with innumerable errors, was declared by a solemn decree of the Council of

Trent to be a faithful translation. The miserable state of the Eastern Church, even at this time, exceeds all belief.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

As might have been expected, fresh attempts were made during this century by the See of Rome to recover its preponderance; the first by Gregory XV., who founded at Rome, in 1622, the famous College "de propaganda fide," consisting of thirteen Cardinals, two Priests, and one Monk; its effects answered the most sanguine expectations.

Urban VIII. founded a similar institution in 1627, for the exclusive education of such as were designed for Foreign Missions. In France the same kind of establishments were founded. From all

these Colleges numbers of Missionaries were sent forth, whose labours particularly augmented the limits of the Church of Rome.

The religious orders who most distinguished themselves in these Missions were the Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Capuchins. Of these, the first were accused of sinister views, by instructing their proselytes in a corrupt system of religion and morality, by insinuating themselves into the affections of the public through the most odious means, and by exciting civil wars in countries which rejected their services. Their efforts especially succeeded in China.

The success of the Romish Missionaries in Japan about the beginning of this century was at first very great; but in consequence of the prejudices of the

Japanese nobility, and the secret jealousy between the Jesuits and the other Missionaries, the Emperor unexpectedly issued an edict, in 1615, by which foreign Christians were ordered to quit the country, the native converts to renounce their religion, and every vestige of Christianity to be obliterated. The scenes which followed this severe decree were most melancholy.

The Protestant States could not observe the captivity of the Romish Missionaries without being stimulated to their own exertions. Accordingly, the Lutherans succeeded in establishing, but for a short time only, a Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The Princes and States of the reformed religion were more fortunate; the English and Dutch especially being zealous in introducing the Gospel into all their colonies in Asia,

Africa, and America. In 1647, a Society for that purpose was established in England, and most liberally encouraged, in 1701, by William III., and has ever since been attended with extraordinary success. The noble efforts this Society made in planting the Gospel among idolatrous nations, especially in North America, deserves the highest commendation.

In Africa, the Cupuchin Missionaries exclusively laboured in converting the idolatrous inhabitants of that vast continent.

In the colonies belonging to Spain, Portugal, and France, in North and South America, little progress was made by the Romish Missionaries, the precious metals of Mexico superseding the religion of Christ.

The enemies which Christianity had

to encounter in England at this period were particularly numerous under Charles II.; several persons of the highest attainments diffusing a sort of violent spirit of scepticism.

Atheistical principles during this century appeared also in France, Portugal, and, to a limited extent, in Germany.

The rapid progress of history, elocution, mathematics, astronomy, as well as the study of Hebrew, Greek, and the Oriental languages, soon, however, advanced the cause of Christianity, by throwing new degrees of light on obscure passages of history; and additional strength was given to those precepts of morality and practice enjoined by Christ and his apostles.

We cannot possibly omit here to mention the name of Sir Isaac Newton,

who raised the mathematical philosophy to the highest degree of perfection; and Grotius, who distinguished himself so much by his elaborate work concerning the rights of peace and war.

Returning to the See of Rome, we find that no stratagem, no artifice, was left unemployed in its attempt for subjugating the Protestants of Europe, or, at least, for oppressing and ruining their cause. One of its plans, long concocted in secret, was to kindle a war against the Protestants, which the house of Austria should execute. This was effected, in 1619, and the desired war carried on during thirty years. The victories of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, ultimately blighted the hopes of the Roman Catholics, and led to the conclusion of the treaty of peace in Westphalia. The Protestants

did not, however, obtain all the benefits they expected, but a new stability was given to the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Germany, so that the religious doctrines of the Lutherans were preserved unaltered throughout this century.

Another contemplated war of the enraged Roman Pontiff being frustrated, he omitted no opportunity of secretly oppressing the members of the Reformed Church, and most mercilessly persecuted the unfortunate Huguenots, of whom thousands fell victims.

In the year 1685, the weak and irresolute Louis XIII., King of France, yielding to the artifices of the See of Rome, revoked the edict of Nantes. This perfidious measure at once deprived the Protestants of their religious privileges.

About the commencement of this century, three Jesuits instigated a set of desperadoes to the hideous plot of destroying, by gunpowder, James I., King of England, the Prince of Wales, and both Houses of Parliament. The timely discovery of this attempt did not suspend the designs of the Roman Pontiff upon England. He had some hopes of succeeding in his views with Charles I., who was entirely led by Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury; but these hopes vanished on the breaking out of the civil war between Charles and his Parliament. Subsequently, ultimate efforts, which consisted in theological conferences, did not result favourably to the Roman Catholic cause. The ancient form of government in the Romish Church yet remained, but a great change had taken place in the

authority of its head. No longer did the most powerful sovereigns of Europe obsequiously bow before the arrogant Pontiff; no longer did the princes tremble at his anathemas; no longer were nations oppressively taxed to satisfy his avarice. The only adulation he now received was from the Colleges he had established, from a few powerless princes, and from the servile Jesuits.

The Roman Pontiffs felt particular indignation against the French monarchs for the constant opposition they had made to their authority. This was the cause of the frequent contests between the Gallican and the Romish Churches during this century.

If we examine the religious system of the Church of Rome, we are surprised to find how much more corrupt it had become than at any former period. No



progress was made in illustrating or interpreting the Scriptures. That dry, intricate, and absurd method of teaching theology which had long been practised, was yet in a great measure retained.

The history of the Greek Church presents the same miserable picture of ignorance and corruption as it did in the preceding century. Among those Greeks who held mercantile intercourse with the polished nations of Europe, are to be found a few men of intelligence and cultivation; but, generally speaking, the mass of the people remained in the profoundest superstition.

Great reformation was made in the Russian Church by Peter I. This Prince took care that the articles of faith received among the Russians should be explained according to the dictates of reason, and the spirit of the Gospel,

and nobly exerted himself in dispelling from his country the superstition that was so prevalent. To accelerate his plans, Peter became the zealous patron of arts and sciences, and granted to all liberty of conscience in religious matters, modified in such a manner as to defeat any attempt of the Romish Church. The dignity of the Patriarch was suppressed, and Peter declared himself to be supreme head of the Church.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BOTH Protestant and Popish Missionaries were active in propagating the doctrines of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and America, during the whole of this century. Very flattering accounts are given of the great success among the

barbarous nations, and with some reason, if success may consist in the number of converts made; but when we consider that these multitudes of converts in the East Indies, in China, on the coast of Malabar, and in America, had received very imperfect notions, and were Christians merely in external profession, it must be admitted that the Jesuits had but little reason to boast.

The English and Dutch during this century, attempted with more zeal than ever, to diffuse Christianity through the dark regions of Asia and America, actively seconded by the Lutherans, who enjoyed at this period peace and tranquillity.

But while these labours were going on in remote parts of the world, many enemies to the Gospel arose in Europe, who endeavoured to deny its truths, or at least to bring it into contempt.

Those intestine divisions, which distracted the Romish Church to such a degree in the preceding century, were revived in this, and all prospect of a reconciliation between the Protestant and the Romish Communions was entirely removed by the famous bull of Clement XI., entitled Unigenitus, which put it out of the power of the pacificators to mitigate those doctrines of Popery which were the most offensive to the friends of the Reformation.

The external state of the Reformed Church remained at this time in nearly the same condition as in the last century.

The Church of England which was now become the leading branch of the Reformed Church, was governed by the same principles that it assumed under the reign of William III. The esta-

blished form of church government was Episcopacy, and all descriptions of Dissenters enjoyed perfect religious toleration.

Nothing memorable happened at this period in the Greek and Eastern Churches. Very little is known either of the efforts or success of the Russian clergy among their countrymen during the earlier part of this century, except that a few propagated the Gospel in Siberia. The Russians, we observed, were gradually becoming more civilized, under Peter the Great, and made rapid progress towards a polished and cultivated state.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY,

FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY TO THE PRESENT TIME.

AFTER this brief summary of the state of the Christian Church, it is almost impossible, for the sake of clearness, to separate its history of the latter part of the eighteenth century, from the pages referring to the nineteenth century, down to the present time.

Returning, therefore, to about the middle of the eighteenth century, it will be seen that besides the many open enemies of the Roman See, a certain spirit of religious levity, was now beginning to undermine its power; and from Italy it very shortly spread through many parts of Germany. At Vienna, in particular, about the year 1753, this spirit displayed itself in the conduct of

Maria Theresa, by the admission of her two physicians, Van Swieten, and de Haen, to her councils and confidence; both members of the Iansenistical Church of Utrecht, succeeded in introducing the principles of that Church into the ecclesiastical councils of Vienna, and in recommending them to the Empress and her ministers. The consequence was, the professorship of Theology and Canon law, were soon held by men of similar sentiments. Their principal aim appears to have been a system of salutary reform, by producing a diminution of the religious orders, by abolishing their exemption from the jurisdiction of the prelacy, by diminishing the intercourse, even in ecclesiastical matters, with the See of Rome, and by subjecting the Church in all spiritual concerns, virtually to the authority of the state.

Many able writers undertook the defence of this "new discipline," as it was called. These Reformers directed their aim at the destruction of the Jesuits, the most effectual allies in the service of the Roman See. The attack on this order commenced in Portugal, where it was suppressed in 1759. The Parliament of Paris, shortly after having examined the bulls, briefs, &c., relating to this society, publicly dissolved that body, within the limits of its jurisdiction, in 1762;—Louis XV., in 1763, confirmed this act.

The same subsequently took place in Bohemia, Spain, Venice, Genoa, Naples, Malta, and Parma.

Clement XIII., who since 1758 occupied the papal chair, was doomed to suffer yet further humiliation from the Duke of Parma, who published a re-

markable edict, virtually annihilating the papal authority in his dominions. Clement had the additional pain of witnessing the calamities of his Roman Catholic subjects in Poland; unable to prevent further acts of encroachment on his tottering power, grief terminated his days in 1769. His successor, Clement XIV., a man of moderation, good sense, and simplicity of manner, well knowing that public opinion had undergone a great alteration, devoted his short reign to promoting the temporal good of his subjects, and to the removing of bigotry and absurd prejudices. This excellent Pontiff died by poison, in 1774; an event which the Jesuits celebrated as a triumph.

Joseph II., at his accession to the throne of Austria. commenced his reign with granting to Protestants throughout

his dominions, the free exercise of their religion, and in spite of remonstrances from the alarmed Pius VI., declared by subsequent edict, all religious foundations in the Austrian Netherlands, exempt from foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction; he further suppressed many religious orders and monastic institutions. Mortifying as was this determined conduct of Joseph, the holy father had yet to receive a deeper wound. The friends of the "new discipline," already mentioned, had long declared the papal nunciatures in Germany as a grievance, and an undue interference on the part of the See of Rome. Accordingly, the Archbishop of Cologne, the Emperor's brother, and the Archbishop of Mentz and Treves, and the Archbishop of Salzburg, assembled at Ashaffenburg, and in August 1786, by

twenty-three articles, certain powers, which had hitherto belonged to the Pope exclusively, were conferred on the Bishops, and the nunciatures abolished. This act was followed by a memorial from the Emperor, wherein he disclaimed all future interference on the part of the Pope, and exhorted his prelates to resist every encroachment on their privileges.

This memorial was again followed by a conference of the ecclesiastical princes of the empire, held at Ratisbone, September 13th, 1706, when it was resolved to withdraw themselves from the jurisdiction of the Pope, and to acknowledge no other supreme head of the Church, but the Emperor.


Thus was an end put to the Sovereign Pontiff's power in Germany, a power that had been maintained for so many

ages, and had been productive of so much bloodshed. A period is now approached when the "new doctrine," which had already spread over Germany, was pouring itself like a torrent over France, sweeping away that superstition, which had marked the Gallican Church. This was, however, not the only cause of a renovation. Men of understanding and reflection had discovered that the Romish Church was directly opposed to the truths of the Gospel, and determined without altogether breaking with that Church, privately to renounce and to reject such doctrines as were unessential, and to abjure rights of human invention. Others, again, without hesitation, sheltered themselves under the standard of the Reformation.

Many other causes obviously produced

the subsequent convulsion in France. The King's imprudent measure of dissolving his parliament in 1789, and calling together the national assembly, hastened it, and two parties from this moment were arrayed in France, against each other. The first act of the national assembly was the seizure of the Church dues. This decree was followed by another, which Louis XVI. himself was compelled to sign, whereby the number of bishoprics was reduced from one hundred and thirty-five to eighty-three, and the nomination to all benefices suspended. All the chapters, abbeys, priories, and chapels were suppressed, and monastic vows prohibited.


Thus was the former splendour of the Gallican Church virtually annihilated. The new government, called the Convention, formed after the decapitation



of the royal family, was equally unrelenting, and even aimed at the extirpation of every vestige of religion; the most shocking decrees to that effect were passed. Horrible scenes followed, which, although suspended by a decree in February, 1795,—forbidding that no particular sect should either predominate or be persecuted, and which induced many of the clergy to return to France, and restored several of the bishops to their sees,—were revived by a counter decree from Robespierre.

It was scarcely possible that in the midst of these disorders, which had now visited almost the whole of Europe, the Roman Pontiff could long maintain that neutrality, which he had contrived hitherto to observe, and by which alone he avoided collision with the Republic of France, well aware of the fatal conse-

quences which might result to his yet great influence, from the adoption of a less wiser conduct. The aggression of the government of France finally compelled him to follow another course, which resulted in open hostilities, when the two comptâts of Venaisn and Avignon, portions of the Papal territory, had been seized. An armistice, in 1796, suspended these hostilities for a time, the French Republic, however, refused every overture, unless the Pope ratified the civil constitution of the clergy. To this injunction his Holiness replied with spirit;—but resistance on the part of the Pope was fruitless. The apostolic troops were routed, and his Holiness obliged to conclude the treaty of Tolentino on the 19th of February, 1797, whereby the French became masters of the greater part of the Papal territory.



Scarcely was this treaty concluded when it was violated by the French. On the 15th of February 1798, the Pope was informed that the Pontifical Government was at an end, and that the Italian Republic was formed and proclaimed. In the ensuing March commenced the demolition of the monasteries, and in May followed the destruction of the English, Scotch, and Irish establishments. The institution of the "Propaganda Fide" followed the same fate.

The first act of the Consulate of France, in 1800, with respect to ecclesiastical affairs, was a decree for restoring the churches to the communes, for the celebration of Divine worship. By a convention entered into shortly after, between the Pope and the Consulate, the former acknowledged Napoleon Bonaparte as the legitimate First Con-

sul of France; and by a Concordate concluded on the 15th of July, 1801, the Roman Catholic religion was re-established in France, though under a more simple and moderate form, than during the legitimate monarchy.

Immediately after the confirmation of the treaty, Bonaparte issued the following regulations, that "no bull, decree, &c., from the Church of Rome should take effect, or be even promulgated, without his authority; that the decrees of foreign synods, or general councils, should not be published in France without his sanction; and, lastly, that the council of state should alone take cognizance of all abuses in ecclesiastical affairs."

Thus was the Pope's authority reduced to a mere shadow, and the Gallican Church deprived of all its ancient power.

Pius VII., in the meantime, while he was daily receiving proofs of the contempt in which he was held by Bonaparte, still pursued that system of duplicity which had so strongly characterised his pontificate. But whatever might be the weakness of this Pope, his intolerance exceeded it. After a proposal for granting universal toleration to all such as dissented from the Romish communion, and every other overture being rejected by the indignant Pontiff, Bonaparte, early in 1808, seized on Ancona, and demanded his co-operation against England; the latter, Pius resisted; in consequence the French occupied Rome, and the Papal states were formally annexed to France on the 17th of May, 1809.

His Holiness solemnly protested against these proceedings, and published

a bull excommunicating all such as had promoted this attack on the Holy See. On the 6th of July, 1809, however, the French seized his person, and conveyed him to Savona, in Dauphiné, where he was detained prisoner till May, 1814, for not conforming to the Emperor Napoleon's proposals.

The restoration of the French Monarchy, and of all other Roman Catholic Governments, again put into the hands of the Papal government its former power; but notwithstanding the cup of adversity, with all its bitterness, had been imbibed by its heads during the last twenty years, yet not an iota of the former intolerance and bigotry was abated. One of the first measures of the Pontiff, on his return to Rome, was the re-establishment of the Jesuits, and the re-organization of the Inquisition.

The persecution of the Protestants in the south of France, which followed immediately after the restoration of the Bourbons, is a corroborative proof of what has just been mentioned. Indeed, the Gallican Church, not less than the other branches of the Popish communion, was equally determined in its opposition to the introduction of the Bible into its system of education; nay, the reading of the Holy Scriptures, without the comments and interpretations of the Bishops, vicars-apostolic, and subordinate clergy, was resisted by all possible means. With respect to the Roman Catholic Church in other quarters of the globe our information is very limited. It, however, appears, that the College "De Propaganda Fide," has been by no means idle. In China, as well as in Persia, the zeal of its

missionaries, has been very conspicuous, and in South and North America, on the coast of Malabar and Coromandel, it succeeded in spreading the doctrines of its Church.

The state of tranquillity to which the Roman Catholics in England were gradually returning, in 1745, was yet far from materially benefiting their situation, as they suffered a certain degree of persecution even as late as the former part of King George III. reign. Petitions pointing at the grievances of the Roman Catholics were repeatedly laid before the Houses of Parliament by several of their advocates, and ultimately resulted in the passing of a bill, by which Catholics in the British Empire, with certain exceptional clauses, were placed on the same footing with other Dissenters.

Many efforts have been made to unite the Greek with the Reformed Church, but hitherto without success.

The Greek Church continues to be of very great extent, comprehending nearly the whole country from the Red Sea to the Frozen Ocean, and from the Caspian Sea to the Adriatic. Yet many of the Greek communion are so much attached to the Romish persuasion, that nothing but a rigorous observance of rites and ceremonies, retain them within the limits of their own Church.

The Russian Greek Church has been making slow but considerable advancement towards improvement, as before mentioned, ever since the Reformation, which was introduced by Peter the Great, who endeavoured to improve every class and order of his subjects, applied himself particularly to the advancement of reli-

gion, and put the affairs concerning the Church in such a beneficial train, that, had his immediate successors followed up the excellent plans acted upon by himself, Russia would at this moment have stood high among the nations of the world for religious and intellectual cultivation. What the immediate successors of Peter neglected, Alexander, by the wisdom of his measures, and other estimable qualities, has amply repaired. When we look at the schools he established, the Bible Societies he formed, and the encouragement he has held out for the promotion of virtue and science, even in the remotest parts of his immense empire, we must admit that this prince has conferred on Russia incalculable blessings.

During the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, several ukases have contribu-

ted to enlarge the limits of the Russian Greek Church, without materially obstructing the exercise of other religions, or without diminishing that religious toleration which characterized the reign of the preceding Czars.

Since the accession of Alexander II., Protestantism begins to increase rapidly in Russia, and through the toleration of the new Emperor, special permission was granted to Protestants to establish Churches and Bible Societies. An allusion, therefore, to the many examples of domestic virtues characteristic of the reign of the present revered monarch, ought not to be omitted; examples so important in their nature, and so promising in their influence, and if not impeded, will confer on Russia incalculable prosperity.

Though the doctrines of Luther had

chiefly taken root in Denmark, Noway, Sweden, Prussia, and Germany, they have considerably increased in Holland, Russia, Hungary, North America, in many parts of Asia, Africa, and the Danish West India islands.

The Lutherans have been long actuated by a spirit of intolerance, whereby the progress of religion was much impeded among them, and the many efforts made by the Reformed Church to produce a re-union retarded. With the nineteenth century, however, these distinctions in doctrines and worship began to disappear, and to the lasting advantage of the Protestant Church, an union at length was brought about in 1817.

The Lutherans have been particularly successful in extending the limits of their church in Russia.

The Concordate of Bonaparte with the Pope, in 1801, facilitated a regular establishment of the Lutheran Church in France, where it has been slowly improving.

The Reformed Church in France, throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, appears to have been depressed. Abandoned by the law, and still an obstacle to Popery, the unfortunate members of that church, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, met for worship in secret, and to the end of Louis XVI's reign, continued to contend with reverses.

In 1801, however, a remarkable protection was granted to the French Protestants, by which they were placed on an equal footing with the Gallican Church. But notwithstanding the blessings thus enjoyed under the protection of Bona-

parte, the Protestants in France, in consequence of the instability of the French Governments, again experienced serious reverses, until lately, when they not only remained unmolested, but towards the latter period of the late Louis Philippe's reign, were suffered to extend the limits of their Church with some degree of stability.

If we direct our attention to the other Reformed Churches on the Continent, we perceive that internal dissensions, resulting from diversity of opinion on theological subjects, have not failed to deteriorate the principles of the Reformation, and have been followed in many instances by a tacit or undisguised abandonment of its doctrine. Indeed, almost all the Churches during the last century, present no other leading feature than that of a rapid decline, partly to

be ascribed to those political struggles and changes which agitated Europe, and which rendered it impossible that spiritual concerns could claim their attention.

At the opening of the eighteenth century, the church of England was just recovering from the effects which had resulted from the extinction of those principles established by the Reformation, and fanaticism had already begun to disappear. Promising as was this gradual improvement, violent party spirit impeded its extension.

Omitting all the controversies and disputes of this period, we proceed to the accession to the British throne of George II. It appears that the Church was beginning to enjoy a larger share of repose than had been the case for many years; controversies were less

frequent, and no enemies existed to excite alarm in the Church, but such as were equally hostile to the State.

In 1760, George III. succeeded to the throne. Early imbued with the principles of religion, this affable King from the commencement of his reign directed all his energies to the promotion of Christianity. So much private and public virtue could not but have a salutary influence on the morals of the higher ranks of society, and through them, was gradually diffused over every part of the kingdom. Perhaps there is no one act that sheds brighter lustre on the memory of this excellent monarch, than that proclamation which he issued soon after his accession, for the encouragement of religion.

Nothing very remarkable having happened during the recent period in

reference to the history of the Protestantism in Great Britain, the present inquiries might be considered as at their end. Before proceeding, however, to some general concluding remarks, it may be noticed that in the first edition of this volume, an allusion was introduced concerning the auspicious reign of the present Sovereign of Great Britain, which since appears realized.

Protestantism in Great Britain has always been called the "Bulwark of the Reformation," and truly, in support of this honourable title, it has been its main pillar during the most gloomy periods of history. Wherever the attention is directed, a succession of most eminent divines will be observed. Their sermons and writings must be admired, while orthodox divinity will be held in due estimation: they have

discussed the most difficult points of theology, they have illustrated particular doctrines with more strength of argument, with more dignified attitude and perspicuity of language, than are to be met with in the writings of the divines of any other nation.

Being permitted therefore to augur favourably of religion, it is to be desired that those principles of Christianity so beneficially developed in Great Britain may be equally established among other nations, and diffused in remote parts of the world.

THE END.

1870

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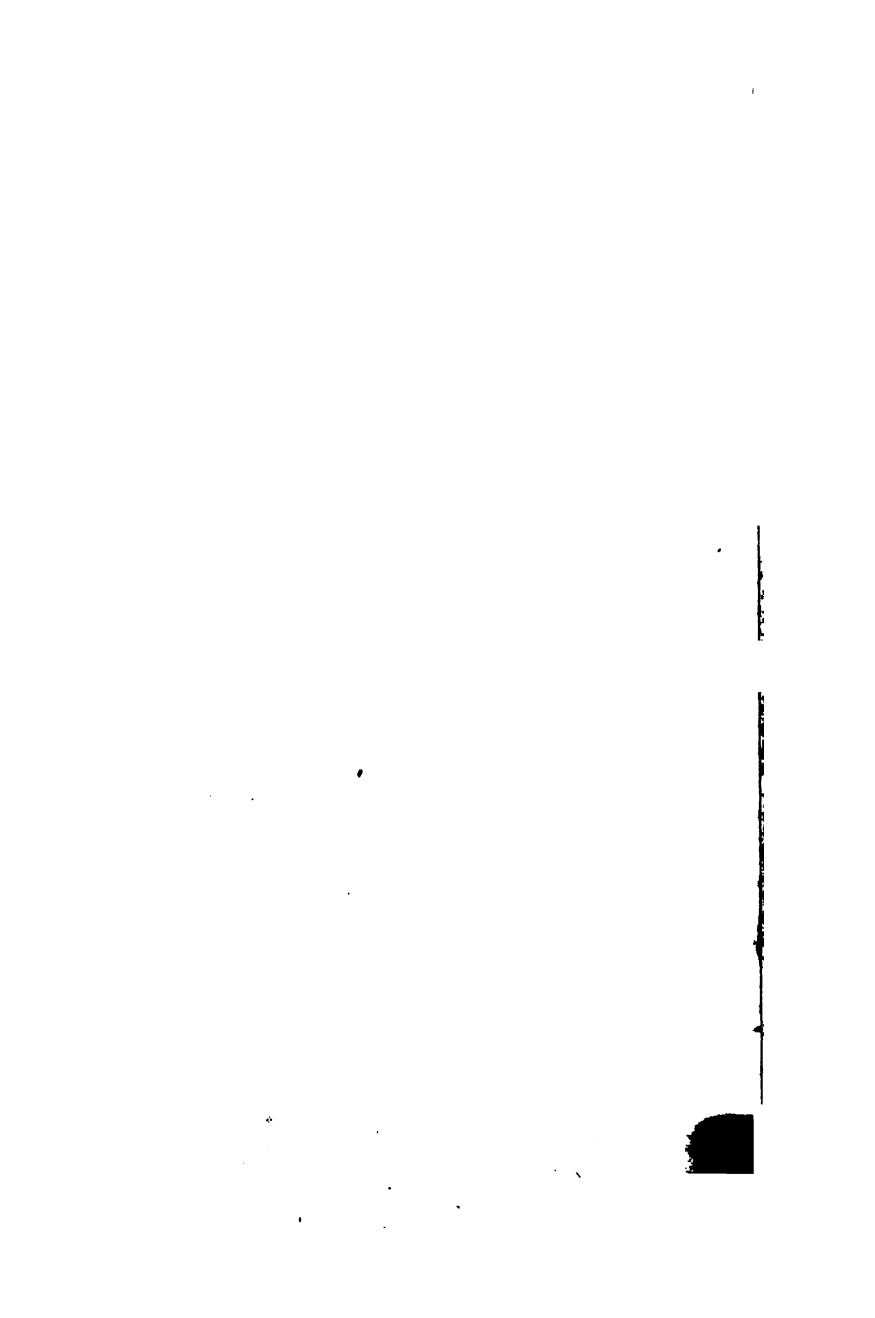
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